Class 265.343 F Book N336
General Theological Seminary Library
CHELSEA SQUARE, NEW YORK 1841

PRESENTED BY
C.C. Haight

M. 13. Haigh

Christmas 1842.

ROBERT NELSON.

Nat. 1656. Ob. 1714. Æt. 58.

London. Published by J. Burns, Portman Street. 1842

THE

GREAT DUTY

OF

FREQUENTING THE

Christian Sacrifice,

AND THE

NATURE OF THE PREPARATION REQUIRED;

WITH

Suitable Devotions.

BY

ROBERT NELSON, Esq.

LONDON: JAMES BURNS

THE NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

THE NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

THE GREAT DUTY

OF FREQUENTING THE

CHRISTIAN SACRIFICE,

AND THE

Nature of the Preparation required:

WITH

SUITABLE DEVOTIONS,

PARTLY COLLECTED FROM THE ANCIENT LITURGIES.

TO WHICH ARE PREFIXED

INSTRUCTIONS FOR CONFIRMATION.

BY

ROBERT NELSON, Esq.

A New Edition, with Memoir of the Author,

BY THE

REV. WILLIAM BENTINCK HAWKINS, M.A., F.R.S.
OF EXETER COLLEGE, OXFORD;
CHAPLAIN TO HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS THE DUKE OF CAMBRIDGE.

LONDON:
JAMES BURNS, 17 PORTMAN STREET.

1841.

33380

265.343F
N336
1841

"For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till He come."—1 Cor. xi. 26.

"We have an altar whereof they have no right to eat which serve the tabernacle."—Heb. xiii. 10.

Memoir of the Author.

"Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth, and their works do follow them." Never, surely, could these most consoling and hopeful words of holy Scripture be applied with more fitness and propriety, and, as we humbly trust, with less of presumption, than to the excellent and admirable Robert Nelson. Many and eminent as are those among the lay members of our holy and apostolic Church, who have defended and set forth that sacred deposit committed unto her keeping, "the faith once delivered unto the saints" —yet few, perhaps, among her sons have displayed more earnestness and zeal in her cause, or have left behind them a name more associated, in the mind of the Christian reader, with "whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report," than Robert Nelson. Well would it be for us who succeed him, to fulfil the concluding words of the beautiful and impressive exhortation of the apostle, and to "think on these things."

Robert Nelson was born June 22, 1656, in London. He was the son of Mr. John Nelson, a considerable Turkey merchant of that city, and his wife Delicia, sister of Sir Gabriel Roberts, also a merchant of London. His father dying when he was but two years old, he was left to the charge of his mother and her brother, Sir Gabriel, who was appointed his guardian. He was first placed at St. Paul's school, in the city of London; but after a time, owing to the wish of his mother to have him more immediately under her own eye, he was taken home to her house at Dryfield, near Cirencester, where he was so fortunate as to be placed under the tuition of the celebrated Dr. George Bull, rector of Suddington, in that neighbourhood, afterwards bishop of St. David's, and one of the most distinguished ornaments of our Church. It is but reasonable to suppose, that it was to the excellent principles instilled into his youthful mind, combined with the instructions which he received from this admirable and learned prelate, that the world is, in great measure, indebted for the various productions of Robert Nelson; a circumstance which will tend much to increase our respect and reverence for his distinguished preceptor.

As soon as he was fit to enter the university, he was admitted a member of Trinity College, Cambridge, first as a pensioner, and afterwards as a fellow-commoner. It appears probable that Archbishop, at that time Dr., Tillotson was consulted on this occasion, as he appears to have been intimately acquainted with Sir Gabriel Roberts, his uncle. Mr. Nelson himself also became acquainted with this prelate very early in life; and the intimacy thus formed soon ripened into a strong and permanent friendship, which continued without interruption until the death of the Archbishop

Tillotson. So high an opinion did Dr. Tillotson entertain of the character of Nelson, that we find him, so early as the year 1681, when the latter was quite a young man, and on his travels, addressing him in the following terms in a letter:—"If I were able, I need not to advise you in any thing, so well am I assured of your virtue and good conduct. I pray for you continually, that God would preserve you and return you safe and the same to us, and give you all the advantages you expected, and will, I am sure, endeavour to make, by your travels. I never know how to part from you, but my business calls me off."

When we consider the different views which were held by these distinguished men on some of the most important subjects which can agitate the human mind, and the opposite opinions which were entertained by them, not only on matters of Church-discipline, but on points of doctrine as well, we can scarcely help feeling surprised at the existence of such a friendship. It is certain, however, that such was the case; and it is moreover evident, from the correspondence which passed between them, that there were very few matters in which either of them were interested, which were not made the subject of mutual communication and advice. The biographer of Archbishop Tillotson tells us, that during his last illness Mr. Nelson sat up two nights with him, and soothed his dying moments. Nor did his friendship terminate even here; he extended it to the widow of his friend, and was very instrumental in obtaining from the government an increase of her pension. The following very interesting letter was addressed by him to the celebrated Lord Somers, on the subject of this increase of pension to Mrs. Tillotson:—

"My Lord,—I took the liberty to put Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer in mind of that favourable answer your lordship procured from the king in reference to Mrs. Tillotson's affairs, in hopes that he would lay some proposals before his majesty for his royal approbation, in order to satisfy the necessity of Mrs. Tillotson's circumstances, and that they might be despatched before the king's departure: since, as I apprehend, matters of this nature suffer extremely by delay, and meet with the best success when the sense of their fitness makes the deepest impression.

"The distance I live from town, and the aversion I have to be troublesome to great men, makes me ignorant of what progress Mr. Chancellor has made; though, I must own, he expressed great zeal to the memory of the archbishop, and professed much readiness and inclination to serve Mrs. Tillotson.

"Your lordship's generous procedure emboldens me to solicit the continuance of your favour; being confident that your lordship will receive a great deal of pleasure from seeing that finished which your lordship's great goodness has given a birth to. And if Mr. Montagu wants any incitement besides your lordship's example, your lordship's constant owning Mrs. Tillotson's cause will be an argument too powerful to be resisted. I have all the respect imaginable for your lordship's post and character; but I must profess, it is the experience of your lordship's personal merit which creates the profoundest respect of

"Your lordship's most obedient

"And most humble servant."

In 1680 Mr. Nelson was elected a fellow of the Royal Society; and in the same year he set out on his

travels in company with Dr. Halley. On the road to Paris they saw the remarkable comet which gave rise to the cometical philosophy of Sir Isaac Newton; and Mr. Nelson, probably in consequence of the information which he received from his fellow-traveller, was enabled to send a description of it to his friend Dr. Tillotson.

Before he left Paris, he received a letter from a friend of his, who was about the English court, Mr. Henry Saville, brother to Viscount Halifax, advising him to purchase a place in it, and promising him his assistance in the negotiation of the affair. Entertaining a great esteem for the king and the Duke of York, he was at first much pleased with the idea of attaching himself to the court of Charles; in which, perhaps, at that period, as it has been well observed, "he was more likely to confer honour than to derive any from it." He would not, however, determine upon an affair of such importance as this, without seeking the advice and approbation of his mother and uncle. In order to obtain the opinion of both these persons on the matter, he seems first to have applied to Dr. Tillotson; assuring him, at the same time, that he intended to be entirely guided by his advice, and that of his relatives.

Dr. Tillotson, in answer to his application, addressed a letter to him, in which he thus replied to his request for advice:—"But now to the main business, to which I find your uncle so absolutely averse, that he did not think fit your mother should be acquainted with it. It is well if you escape chiding from him. As for myself, than whom no person in the world can wish you better, since you are pleased to repose that kind confidence in me as to ask my advice, I will faithfully give it. In the present uncertainty of things, I would not have you

venture so considerable a sum as those places go at; and unless *somebody* grow better, which I hope God will grant, the temptations to which a man must be exposed in that station, are like to be so violent as would set the firmest virtue hard, even my friend's, of whom I have so good an opinion."

In another letter, addressed by Dr. Tillotson to Nelson, dated June 2, 1681, he alludes to the same subject:—"I wish," says he, "your good opinion of my judgment were as well grounded as that of my sincere friendship and affection for you most certainly is. Your mother is perfectly well satisfied, as I told her she had great reason, since you referred yourself to the advice and judgment of your friends, by which, I assured her, you would most certainly govern your resolutions. I shall be happy to see England so happy as that the court may be a fit place for you to live in."

Finding no encouragement from either his relatives or his friend, he appears to have relinquished the scheme altogether, and pursued his journey with his companion to Rome. Here he became acquainted with the Lady Theophila Lucy, widow of Sir Kingsmill Lucy, of Broxburne, Herts, and second daughter of George Earl of Berkeley. This lady, although considerably older than himself, appears after a short time to have manifested a strong regard for him, which, it would seem, was returned on his part; for after his return to England in 1682, he united himself in marriage to her. His disappointment and regret, however, were very great at finding that she had deceived him on a most material subject, the change, namely, which had taken place in her religious opinions. It appeared that she had been induced to embrace the errors of popery whilst travelling abroad; and that the change in her faith, which she was

some time in acknowledging, was to be attributed to her acquaintance with Bossuet, and also to the conversations which she had held whilst at Rome with Cardinal Philip Howard, grandson of the Earl of Arundel, the collector of the marbles which bear his name at Oxford. Unhappily this religious apostacy was not confined to herself alone, but extended also to her daughter by her first husband, whom she drew over by her influence to adopt the corrupt faith of Rome. Not contented with this, she became a writer in one of the controversies of the time; and was the supposed authoress of a piece, printed in the year 1686, entitled, "A Discourse concerning a Judge of Controversy in matters of Religion; shewing the Necessity of such a Judge."

This unhappy renunciation of our holy faith on the part of this lady affected her husband very deeply; so much so, indeed, that not contented with employing his own abilities as a writer in endeavouring to recover her from her errors, he also prevailed upon his friends Archbishop Tillotson and Dr. George Hickes to engage in the same task. The former addressed a long letter to her on the subject; and Dr. Hickes published on her account his "Collection of Controversial Discourses;" in which also is inserted, among other papers, "A Letter to an English Priest of the Romish Communion at Rome," written by Robert Nelson for the use of his lady. All their efforts, however, proved ineffectual; and she seems to have continued a member of the Roman faith until her death, which took place in 1705.

Her change of opinions made no change in the affection entertained towards her by her husband; for when she fell into a weak state of health, which rendered it necessary for her to drink the waters at Aix, he accompanied her thither in 1688; and being dissatisfied with

the prospects of the revolution, and the removal of James II. from the throne, instead of returning home, he extended his journey further, and revisited Italy in company with his wife and her son and daughter by her former husband. Returning through Germany, he stayed some time at the Hague, and from thence came to England in 1691, still entertaining an unfavourable opinion of the change which had taken place in the government.

About this time he seems to have become a nonjuror. Among the new connexions into whose company he was a good deal thrown in consequence of this step, was the Rev. Mr. Kettlewell, who had resigned his living of Coleshill in Warwickshire, owing to his objection to take the oaths of allegiance to William and Mary. Kettlewell is said to have advised Nelson to engage in the composition of devotional works of a general character; observing to him, that he was able to compose very excellent books of that kind, which would be apt also to do more good as coming from a layman. It may safely be said that such a suggestion as this alone would have been quite sufficient to have endeared the memory of its author to every religious person, even if he had not acquired a high reputation by his own writings. Our author, in return for this advice, is said to have encouraged Kettlewell to proceed in the gentle and temperate manner in which he so much excelled, with regard to the management of the controversy between the nonjurors and those who entertained opposite views. Kettlewell at his death, which happened in 1695, left Mr. Nelson his sole executor and trustee; in consequence of which he published several of his posthumous works.

Mr. Nelson engaged with the greatest zeal in supporting and encouraging every plan which was set on

foot for the propagation of our holy faith, both at home and abroad, and was himself the originator of several admirable and useful institutions. The establishment of charity-schools, for the children of the poor throughout the metropolis, was chiefly owing to his indefatigable exertions. It was for the use of these schools, indeed, that his work, entitled "The Whole Duty of a Christian," was written. He was an active promoter of the Societies for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts, and for Promoting Christian Knowledge, and assisted in their formation. We find his name also, together with other eminent and pious individuals of the period, among the commissioners appointed by Queen Anne for the building of fifty new churches in London. In short, every scheme and design which had for its object to promote the good of man and the glory of God, was sure to enlist Robert Nelson amongst its most active and liberal supporters. His time, his talents, and his purse, appear to have been always ready to answer the various calls of charity, benevolence, and religion.

In his posthumous work, entitled "An Address to Persons of Quality and Estate," he enumerates various benevolent and religious designs, which are recommended and enforced by him with all the arguments which a truly pious and Christian spirit, united to eminent talents, could supply. The list is so complete, that it will be found to comprise a perfect system of the most enlarged and practical benevolence. They are classed under two heads: 1. "those wants which relate to the souls of men;" 2. "those wants which relate to the bodies of men." Under the first head, he mentions "the building of churches, or chapels of ease, in the large parishes of the city of London, or in any other city or town where they are wanted; the dispersing of

Bibles, Common Prayer-books, and other plain practical treatises; the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts; setting up colleges or seminaries for the candidates of holy orders, and particularly for the mission into America and other remote parts; promoting the propagation of the Christian faith in those parts which are not comprehended within the charter of the Society for Propagating the Gospel in Foreign Parts; promoting the life and spirit of Christianity at home; the governors of the Bounty of Queen Anne for the augmentation of the maintenance of the poor Clergy; the Society for the Reformation of Manners, by whose endeavours the laws are put in execution against vice and immorality; the erecting of charity-schools, or contributing to the support of them; the erecting a superior school for training up schoolmasters and schoolmistresses; the erecting parochial libraries in the newly endowed cures throughout England."

Under the second head, Mr. Nelson mentions "the relieving the orphans and widows of clergymen; providing for the able poor in a way of industry; relieving poor distressed housekeepers: relieving decayed tradesmen, and putting them into a capacity to maintain themselves for the future; relieving poor prisoners."

We have been thus particular in stating all of these in Mr. Nelson's own words, because, excellent as they are in themselves, they can scarcely fail to excite an additional interest and claim upon the sympathy of all those who become acquainted with their nature and object, from being associated with a name so excellent and honoured. The editor of the work from which we have cited them, in his "Premonition" to the reader, observes: "What other ways and methods this charitable gentleman might have had in his view for the

service of God's Church, and for the welfare of his country, but especially for the true dignity and honour of persons of rank and quality, and those in particular whom he was personally acquainted with, or related unto, though it cannot be said with any certainty, yet from the books which he hath published, and from the minutes which he hath left behind him, with some imperfect sketches, both of his own and others, it may not be very difficult to divine of what sort they must be; and that the chief end which he had constantly in his eye, was to revive the life and spirit of genuine Christianity, and, without any partial respects whatsoever, to restore all things according to the primitive economy of the Church, and as they were in the beginning; for there are some other heads of charity minuted down by him, besides those which are here discoursed upon. It appears he had a design of using his best endeavours to restore the most ancient practice of devotion, in relation both to the end and the means of religion; partly from the ancient liturgies and holy doctors of the Church in its first and purest ages, and partly from the best masters among the moderns in that divine art. He had much at his heart the great duty of Christians with respect to the Christian sacrifice and sacrament; and had laid thereupon a design of encouraging, by all means in his power, the frequent celebration of, and attendance upon it. One favourite design he had for supporting well-disposed youths, whether at the universities or elsewhere, and for employing them in such a manner as might make them one day to shine with a peculiar lustre. The last, and the greatest design which he had of doing good, is here but just hinted at; it was the setting up of certain houses of industry and piety, as a superstructure upon those schools whereof he was so eminent

a patron, under such regulations and orders as might comprehend in them all that which either good princes and lawgivers have for the wisdom of their country been able to devise, or which the pious founders of churches and colleges, hospitals, and other houses of charity and industry, have chiefly had in their view. By which it was proposed, not only to provide a good education for youth, and a religious retirement for the superannuated, but a comfortable subsistence to the poor of all sorts, with profit and advantage at the same time to the rich."

Upon the death of Dr. Lloyd, the deprived Bishop of Norwich, in 1709, Mr. Nelson ceased to be a non-juror. It was owing to the advice of Bishop Ken, indeed, that he decided upon taking this step, which caused him considerable deliberation; for he appears to have engaged in some conferences upon this subject with Dr. G. Hickes, and several letters passed between them as to its propriety, which are contained in the work entitled "The Constitution of the Catholic Church, by G. Hickes, D.D."

Upon the death of Bishop Bull, which took place in the same year, he was prevailed upon, by the son of that eminent prelate, to draw up an account of the life and writings of his father, which was afterwards published in the year 1713; a task for which he was eminently qualified by the long and intimate friendship which he had maintained with the bishop. He appears always to have preserved a grateful remembrance of the many advantages which he had derived from him during his education, and he therefore spared no pains in rendering all justice and honour to his memory. This labour of love, as it may with truth be called, was the last work which he undertook; since shortly after its publication, an asthma and dropsy of the chest, under which he had

laboured for some time, increased so much, that for the sake of change of air he was induced to retire to the house of his cousin Mrs. Wolf, the daughter of Sir Gabriel Roberts, who resided at Kensington. Nothing, however, could arrest the progress of the disease, which finally carried him off, at the house of this lady, on the 16th of January, 1714, at the age of fifty-nine.

The following anecdote of his last moments is told by Mrs. Berkeley, in her preface to her son's poems. She says, "she has frequently heard Mrs. Cherry relate the following, she thinks, curious anecdote of her excellent intimate friend, Robert Nelson, Esq. When dying, he lay several hours speechless, perfectly composed, taking no nourishment, shewing no signs of life; but it was perceptible that he continued to breathe. About four in the afternoon, the day preceding his death, he suddenly put back the curtain, raised his head, and uttered the following sentence: 'There is a very great fire in London this night;' then closed his eyes, and lay some few hours as before." (p. 448.) In regard to this anecdote, it appears that a fire took place about this time in Thames Street, near the Custom-house, which began in the night of the 13th, and continued burning until noon of the next day.

Mr. Nelson was buried in the cemetery of St. George's Chapel, now a parochial church, in Lamb's Conduit Fields, where a monument has been erected to his memory, with a long and elegant Latin inscription written by Bishop Smalridge. He is said to have been the first person who was interred in this cemetery. His benevolence of character was equally remarkable in his death as in his life; for he bequeathed the whole of his fortune for charitable purposes, particularly for the maintenance and support of charity-schools.

His funeral sermon was preached by the Rev. Dr. Marshall, in Ormond Street chapel, February 6, 1714, and was shortly afterwards published at the request of the trustees of the chapel. The account which the reverend preacher gives of the life of Robert Nelson contains so many striking traits of genuine and unaffected piety, disinterested benevolence, and deep and fervent love for religion and her interests, that it may truly be said to comprise a delineation of an almost perfect Christian character; as far so at least as the infirmities of human nature, in the contest which is continually going on, even in the best of men, between the flesh and the spirit, will permit their possessor to attain to such a condition.

"I can have no end to serve by flattering this gentleman's memory," says Dr. Marshall; "nor do I fear the imputation of it in a case where all the difficulty will be to say enough. In the duties of godliness, so assiduous he was and fervent, so uniform and constant, so serious and unaffected, that I know not where either our religion, or our place of worship, hath a brighter ornament left to either. His constant attendance at the *eucharistical sacrifice*, his exemplary and reverend behaviour there, was so very edifying and conspicuous, as helped to warm many cold and lukewarm hearts, and to inflame them with a like spirit of true and fervent piety. Such regular and orderly devotion, such a pure and holy flame, an heart so zealously affected, with an head to govern it so cool and temperate, how beautiful, how engaging, was the goodly pattern! *Was* it, did I say? I hope, I believe, I may say, *it is so still* in manifold *other* instances; some of them, doubtless, formed upon the model of his example, which, I trust, will spread yet more and farther, and go on to make, where it does not find, many ready followers. Religion seemed, indeed,

and doubtless was, the care of his life; it grew, it flourished observably, under the happy influence of his pious endeavours and his engaging practice. His learning, large as it was and various, was set apart for the service of the altar, and sanctified to religious uses; and many a pious soul breathes daily to God its holy aspirations of prayer and praise in the language of his heart and tongue. For such holy purposes, his tongue was the pen of a ready writer to what his heart indited. His works in this kind will live, I dare foretel, as long as our language, and even *then* will deserve to have a new language given them. His zeal and his knowledge served each other so mutually, with such reciprocal kindness, that the one was neither barren nor unfruitful, nor the other giddy nor excessive; his light and his heat were so justly proportioned, corresponded so well and so aptly together, and his will was so duly subordinate to his understanding, that his religion sat upon him with all the graces of outward decency, as well as with all the intrinsic beauties of holiness. He was zealous for his God, and for the honour of His service; and therefore only preferred above others the Church of England, because *here* he thought *that* honour best consulted. He understood, by due inquiry, that she was the most conformable, both in doctrine and government, to the model *once* and *first delivered to the saints;* for neither his faith nor his practice proceeded upon trust, but upon a reasonable choice. He had, as much as any, proved, examined, considered all things; was able to satisfy himself, and to give a reason to others, of the hope which was in him; and where once he fixed, he fixed upon so good a foundation, that he was not easily removed from it by any wind of doctrine; but having rightly apprehended, he ever held fast that which was good.

" Nor was he, in the second place, at all deficient in the social virtues. Not deficient, did I say? nay, he abounded in love and in good works. Either nature or grace had blessed him with such a flowing courtesy of mind and manners, that few provocations could break in upon or disconcert it. Zealous as he was (and surely no man was more, or more truly so) for the honour of his God, he was never thence transported to any undue excursions against man. No man conversed more generally than he with all persuasions, and no man more inoffensively; nor, therefore, with more likelihood of recommending to all men the doctrine of his God and Saviour. Whenever the assaults of heresy obliged him to appear in defence of the faith, and to contend for the truth as it is in Jesus, as personal respects were beside the question, he candidly threw them out of it. A rare example this to our angry writers upon disputed subjects! who think it not enough to confute an adversary without confounding him; and have not learned from his Christian practice the happy secret of distinguishing between the person and the error.

" Nor may his gratitude pass here unmentioned, nor his pious regard to the memory of that excellent prelate Bishop Bull, who formed his tender mind, and sowed in it those seeds of knowledge and virtue which spread afterwards such numerous and goodly branches. This he was sensible was a benefit never enough to be acknowledged nor requited. The bishop's own works have spoke his praise; but the grateful pupil was desirous of adding his own eulogies; which he hath done effectually, by leaving it inscribed upon a lasting monument, that *such a master* had *such a scholar*. But, above all, his works of mercy, his labours of love, these were his darling, his best-beloved employments. The

poor, the fatherless, and the widow, will never enough lament his irreparable loss. The societies which have been lately formed for various purposes of piety and charity will miss in him a faithful counsellor, a prudent director, an able manager, and every way accomplished for the glorious and godlike work of doing good. Many expenses in life, which feed the vices and vanities of others, he prudently cut off as superfluous, that he might have the more to give to such as needed. His frugality was no cover to avaricious purposes, but all his economy was designed to make room for charity; which he did not so much reserve for bequests at his death, as, like a wise and good steward, he was a liberal dispenser of it in his life. Pompous he would be in neither, that in both he might be more useful.

"In the last place, for the personal virtues, they were no less cultivated, no less recommended by the advantage of his practice, than were the offices of piety and the social duties. No man ever advanced the character of a private gentleman to a more elevated pitch than he: in him the gentleman and the Christian were so happily united, he did so adorn religion, and was so adorned by it, that the rising generation may hence with great advantage observe how perfectly consistent these characters are, and how much they may *both* be depreciated by a neglect of their common duties. He knew how to preserve them from interfering, and wore them both with a distinguished lustre. To separate the one from the other, is indeed to spoil them both, or, at least, very much to disparage and discommend them. Meekness will appear no such mean, low-spirited principle, when it shines in a form like his; and instead of raising your contempt, engages your esteem and reverence. He had studied both books and men; knew the

fallacies of the one, and the follies of the other; yet was ever more ready to discern a merit or a virtue than a weakness or a vice in either. Hence that impassionate, equal, and candid frame of mind, which shone in him with peculiar graces, took its rise and its establishment.

"Self-love had on him no other influence than what is its only proper one, the direction of all his aims and purposes to the supreme good of man, which is the glory of God and the salvation of his own soul. Hence he derived that admirable calm and patience, that firm affiance in the mercies of God through Christ Jesus, that full assurance of hope in His promises, which supported him under the weakness and pressure of a lingering obstinate distemper, and sweetened to him at last the very bitterness of death itself. Thus he ended as he had all along spent his days; was the same person still, maintaining the same character, and carrying it with him to the place of refreshment. He died as he had lived, like a lamb, without commotion or struggle, submissive to the will of God, and entirely resigned to His holy providence. And having borne the character of a righteous and merciful man in his life, he hath, I doubt not, the blessing also assigned by the prophet, that he is 'entered into peace,' that he 'rests in his bed,' and 'walks in his own uprightness.'"

Mr. Nelson was the author of several works, in addition to the one now reprinted, of which the following is, we believe, a complete list:

The Practice of True Devotion; first published in 1698.

Companion for the Festivals and Fasts of the Church of England. 1703.

Great Duty of Frequenting the Christian Sacrifice. 1706.

Transubstantiation contrary to Scripture; and the Protestant's Answer to the Seeker's Request. 1688.

Account of the Life and Writings of the Rev. Mr. Kettlewell. 1695.

A Letter on Church-Government; in answer to a pamphlet, entitled "The Principles of the Protestant Reformation." 1705.

A Letter to Dr. Samuel Clarke, prefixed to "The Scripture Doctrine of the most Holy and Undivided Trinity." 1713.

Life of Bishop Bull, prefixed to the Sermons of Bishop Bull. 4 vols. 8vo, 1713-15.

Whole Duty of a Christian, by way of Question and Answer; exactly pursuant to the method of the Whole Duty of Man.

The Pastoral Letter of Archbishop Fenelon; translated from the French.

The Christian's Exercise, by Thomas à Kempis; with an Introduction by Robert Nelson, Esq.

Address to Persons of Quality and Estate. 1715. This last work was published shortly after the death of the author.

The three works which stand first in this list have always been considered the most valuable of Mr. Nelson's productions, and have enjoyed the most general approbation and favour from the date of their publication. One of the leading characteristics of these works, and which, indeed, is common to all the writings of Mr. Nelson, is the great clearness and simplicity of style and expression visible throughout their pages, and the singular, and at the same time most happy, union of strong and plain good sense, sound judgment, extensive and practical learning, accompanied with the most fervent and zealous piety. All these qualities are particu-

larly remarkable in the "Great Duty of Frequenting the Christian Sacrifice;" a subject in which their presence is more required than in most others. In this work the author has supplied every kind of information which can be desired by the Christian student with regard to this great and awful mystery; and in addition to an account of the general nature and design of the "most comfortable sacrament of the body and blood of Christ," enriched with choice selections from the stores of primitive learning and antiquity, he has furnished the communicant with a series of devotions adapted to every portion of the office of the holy Communion, and calculated for use as well before approaching the altar as after the reception of this most sacred ordinance; every one of the prayers contained in which, moreover, breathes a spirit of the most sincere and humble piety. This work may, indeed, be called a sacramental manual for private meditation in the solitude of the chamber; for perusal after we ourselves have partaken of the holy symbols, whilst our fellow-communicants are in the act of receiving; and for reflection and meditation when we have left the church, and when, amidst the quiet and retirement of our own homes, we feel the duty incumbent upon us of pondering upon those grave and important obligations which we have again taken upon ourselves, of leading "a new life, following the commandments of God, and walking from henceforth in His holy ways."

We cannot conclude this short memoir better than by the insertion of the following letter, which was addressed by Mr. Nelson to his cousin, George Hanger, Esq. on occasion of his going abroad. It has never before been printed, except in Nicholl's Literary Anecdotes, and appears to have been preserved with great care by Mr. William Bowyer, into whose possession it

had come, and by whom it was highly valued. Any thing from the pen of one so excellent as a writer, and so admirable as a Christian, will be acceptable and welcome to all classes of readers; and the letter in question is so good, and contains so much sound instruction and well-timed advice, that it can scarcely fail to be useful and profitable, particularly to the young.

To George Hanger, Esq.

DEAR COUSIN,

YOUR father having designed to send you for Turkey by the next ships bound to those parts, and intending thereby to breed you to business, that you may be enabled to advance your own fortune in the world, and to assist your brothers when they shall be fit to receive the advantages of your kindness; I cannot forbear commending that readiness of mind you have shewn on this occasion to comply with that scheme which your father, on mature deliberation, with the advice of your best friends, has formed for the employment of your youth. So near a relation can never want kindness to design that which is best for you; and the advantages of his good sense and great experience enable him to judge right in this matter; so that, being governed by the dictates of so kind and wise a father, you steer by a much surer compass than by following the suggestions of your own thoughts, which must want due ripeness in that path of life you now tread. I look upon this first step of your conduct to be a happy presage of your future wisdom and steadiness, and a good omen that your voyage of life will be prosperous and successful; for the miscarriage of many a youth has been owing to his own wilfulness and obstinacy, refusing the advice and guidance of his best friends when he stood most in want of it. Being therefore, sir, determined to travel, by your father's appointment and by your own prudent consent, I thought myself obliged to give you some advice in relation to your future conduct; and you

ought to bear with me the rather in this matter, because I have had some share in the care of your education; besides, the character of a godfather entitles me in some sort to prescribe to you. But whether any of these reasons would have prevailed upon me, if I had not felt a particular love and kindness for you, I know not. I am sure the liberty I am now about to take proceeds from a sincere and hearty concern for your future welfare; and upon that ground, therefore, I hope it will be agreeable and acceptable to you.

I. In the first place, I must beg you often to reflect upon the great end for which you were sent into the world; which was, not to sport away your time in pleasure, nor only to get a fair estate, but to fit and prepare yourself for a happy eternity in the enjoyment of God, by a constant and universal obedience to all His holy laws; in comparison of which, all the labours of life are mere trifles. My reason for giving you this hint is, that, by having your chief business always in your view, you may be continually upon your guard, so that neither the pleasures nor business of life, nor the desires of growing rich, may ever cause you to forget that you are a stranger upon earth, and that your days are as a shadow which will soon pass away.

II. In the second place, you must endeavour that this great end be prosecuted steadily and vigorously, by all those ways and means which God has established for the working out your salvation. You must resolve upon a holy and virtuous life, if ever you pretend to attain that happiness which God has promised. All other ways of getting to heaven are fallacious, and will in the end deceive you, if ever you are so unhappy as to trust to them; for "without holiness, no man shall see the Lord." Now, the virtue and holiness I mean are of a large extent, and comprehend your duty to God, your neighbour, and yourself; and is what the apostle calls living "righteously, soberly, and godly in this present world." In order to this purpose, God has given us His holy word, to instruct us in the particulars of our duty; which, therefore, you must frequently peruse with great application of mind. He has, moreover,

encouraged our addresses to Him, by promising to hear our prayers; which we must therefore offer to Him in our closets and in the public congregations, that we may receive strength and power from above to perform our duty. He has farther instituted the holy Sacrament, to be "a continual memorial of the sacrifice of Christ's death, to convey to us the benefits of His sufferings." Therefore, if you sincerely desire the pardon of your sins, grace and assistance to conquer them, and to make a progress in all virtue, you must frequently approach the altar, where these blessings are to be found; and, indeed, a man must have but very slight notions of the benefits of Christ's death that refuses to give this easy testimony of a thankful heart. You must frequently examine yourself, that you may exercise repentance where you may fall short of your duty, and that you may thank God where you have been enabled to perform it. You must accustom yourself to meditate upon such divine subjects as occur in the course of your reading, that you may stir up all the faculties of your soul to a vigorous prosecution of them. The afore-mentioned means of grace are not to be rested in as the substance of religion, but are to be used as necessary to beget in us true piety and virtue; and except we aim at that in the use of them, they will not be acceptable to God. A man may be a bad man, and frequent them; and yet there is no being good without them, when the providence of God gives us the opportunity to enjoy them.

III. In the third place, I must desire you, as much as you can, to live by rule and method; to divide the day into such proportions, that a proper time may be assigned for all your actions; that the hours of your devotion, of your business, and your diversions, may all be stated; thus time will not lie upon your hands, nor sting you with regret when past. While you are subject to the commands of others, you must be content to have your hours of business regulated by them; these you will quickly be acquainted with; and what are left to your own disposal must be employed partly in your prayers, in

reading good books, and such as are otherwise commendable, both French and Latin, that you may not lose those languages you have taken so much pains to acquire.

IV. In the fourth place, I must advise you to diligence and industry in your business, which is the best method to make it succeed. "Seest thou a man," says Solomon, "diligent in his business, he shall stand before princes." The wisdom of man is distinguished by using proper and fit means to attain his end. Therefore, as you are concerned to support that character, and desire to bring to perfection what you project, you must never be careless or negligent in those things committed to your trust and management; for this is even to offend against the duties of religion.

V. In the fifth place, since trade and commerce are pitched upon for your employments, never deviate from exact justice and uprightness in all your dealings. Every particular circumstance of life has its particular temptation; and a man that sincerely designs his duty will put his guard on that place where the greatest danger is apprehended. Frequent dealings with others present to us as frequent opportunities of overreaching them; and the more a man is trusted, the better he is able to play the knave. Now, though I think as to this world that honesty is the best method of thriving, because it secures credit and reputation, which are the main instruments of trade and commerce, yet there are some opportunities of unrighteous gain that require good principles of religion to keep a man right. Remember always, that no repentance will make our peace with God for ill-gotten goods without restitution, which makes that necessary work difficult and irksome; that, whatever varnish we are able to put upon our injustice before men, yet God sees through the whole deceit, and will one day judge us for it; and it contradicts the great rule laid down by our Saviour, of doing to others as we would they should do unto us.

VI. In the sixth place, I must not forget to enjoin you to take care to beware of covetousness, because the love of money

is the root of all evil; and it is a secret poison, which destroys the souls of such men who otherwise appear sober and virtuous. Besides, this is a vice particularly incident to those that get estates by their own industry, and therefore it is the more necessary to give you warning of it. Be not, therefore, over eager in the pursuit of riches; and when they increase, set not your heart upon them. To acquire them by unjust means is the perfection of covetousness. But this vice lurks in many other actions less notorious; as when a man pursues the world to the neglect of the duties of religion, even of prayer in his closet and family; when his mind is always anxious about the success of his projects; when the poor have no share of his gains; when he is sordid, and cannot find in his heart to enjoy moderately what he possesses, or, if he does, spends it upon his lusts; and when he makes riches his trust and confidence. Now the love of this world is enmity against God, and does as effectually debar us from heaven as all the extravagances of lewdness and debauchery.

VII. In the seventh place, I must put you in mind of keeping good company; by which I mean chiefly men of pious and virtuous dispositions; though, with these qualifications, it may be extended to those of the best rank and quality where you reside, from whom you will be able to learn more than from those of an inferior education. And it is often seen, that a young gentleman, newly come into the world, is more frequently ruined by mean and inferior company than by conversing with his superiors, for whom, having a deference, he becomes more modest and humble in his behaviour; whereas, when he finds himself the top of the company, it disposes him to pride and vanity. It is difficult for those whose circumstances throw them into a great deal of company always to avoid that which is bad; and charity may sometimes oblige men to converse with such, in order to their reformation, were there any probable hopes of making bad men better. But it is in every man's power to choose what persons he designs for friendship and frequent conversation; a matter of that import-

ance, that it requires time and serious deliberation before you engage. Men of no principles of religion are not to be relied upon, having no foundation to support friendship—besides, they may be apt to infect you with scepticism; and men who believe religion, and act contrary to their principles, give but a scurvy proof of their sincerity, and by their bad example may insensibly corrupt your morals. Those we love have a mighty influence over us; therefore let not a wicked man become your intimate.

VIII. In the eighth place, I must advise you to obstinate temperance in drinking,—the best method to preserve health, and a virtue strictly enjoined by the Christian religion. There is no young man that converses in the world but who is more or less exposed to this temptation; but your particular situation of Smyrna, by reason of the frequent arrival of ships, will make it difficult for you not to exceed the Christian measure, except you arm yourself with great resolution. Never think it a piece of manhood to be drunk yourself, or to make others so; for this is to distinguish yourself by what is the deprivation of manhood, extinguishing at once both your sense and reason; besides, it will make you liable to many unfortunate accidents. A debauch has brought many a fever which has ended in death; has occasioned the breaking of many a limb, which is not recovered without pain and charge; and how many have broke their necks on such occasions, and so gone out of the world without repenting of so great a crime! Sometimes it creates quarrels, which have cost the life of one or both the disputants. But if you escape these dangers, that affect the body, your best part, your soul, must suffer by so plain a breach of your duty, till you reconcile yourself to God by unfeigned repentance. Never reckon an excess in drinking a small fault, a *peccadiglio*, for this may prevail upon you to comply with the importunity of others: it is certainly a breach of God's laws; and you must count nothing inconsiderable that offends Him. Be free to own your weakness as to drinking—that it prejudices your health, and that you are not able to bear so much as others;

and then, if the company have any good manners, they will not press you. When you entertain friends yourself, introduce coffee and tea after dinner, and propose some diversion, that drinking may be hindered. Several little arts a man will call to his assistance, that designs to keep himself and the company sober. But then, if you are at any time surprised, immediately next day testify your repentance, profess your sorrow to God, and resolve on more firmness for the time to come: if your companions should make a jest of it, let them know it is no jesting matter. And I think you would do well if you punished yourself for so unfortunate an accident, by imposing upon yourself a day of fasting, or by abstaining from the use of wine for two or three days.

IX. In the ninth place, I must caution you against uncleanness, so frequent a failure in youth, and which when once indulged will corrupt the best principles, and has carried many a man to scepticism and infidelity; because, when a man cannot reconcile his constant practice to the laws of religion, he casts about how to get rid of the obligation of such laws, which bear so hard upon him, and give him so much uneasiness. Now, the best rule in this case is, never to indulge the least appearance of this vice; to discourage all loose and wanton thoughts which may arise in your mind; to forbear all obscene and filthy discourse; to avoid all familiarity with the fair sex; not to seem pleased when others attempt to divert the company by lewd jests; to be modest towards yourself, and to treat yourself with reverence and respect. For chastity consists in a due government of those appetites which God has placed in us for the propagating of mankind, which are never to be gratified but in a state of matrimony; so that any thing that tends to provoke these appetites out of that state, by our own voluntary consent, has a share of the guilt of the last act, and is what we must be accountable for, and therefore ought carefully to be watched against. If you ever give yourself up to this vice, you will expose your constitution to great shocks, make your body the sink of many noisome diseases, consume

your estate, neglect your business, and bring contempt upon you from all sober people; it will harden you against all good advice, provoke the wrath of God, and infallibly draw upon you in the next world the miseries of a sad eternity.

X. In the tenth place, guard yourself from the bane of conversation, which is evil-speaking: this lessening the reputation of others, by exposing their faults, is grown so common, that, more or less, even good people split upon this rock; so that, if you have not a particular watch over yourself, you will be carried down the stream and become involved in this common calamity. Some people never examine the truth of what they report, provided it was told them; but this is calumny and slander: and if they know what they say to be true, yet if neither justice nor charity require the discovery, it is the vice of evil-speaking, forbid by the Christian religion. For when there is no justifiable reason to the contrary, we ought to throw a veil over the faults of our neighbour; for this is the treatment we desire from them. We are not willing what is true of ourselves should be exposed to public view; besides, it is contrary to that love which is due to our neighbour, which, when sincere, will dispose us to cover those defects that may tend to the impairing of his reputation. Now the more you mortify the evil passions of pride, envy, and revenge, the less you will be subject to detraction, which very often proceeds from them. An over-busy, meddling temper will expose you to the same temptation; but, if you would entirely secure yourself, resolve never to speak evil of any one. Do not suffer yourself to repeat stories to the disadvantage of others, though never so public; for though this on some occasions might be innocently done, yet by degrees it may insensibly betray you to real defamation.

XI. In the eleventh place, I must give you a great charge, not to suffer yourself to be infected with the common vice of swearing. You will find yourself tempted to this unreasonable sin by the practice of all nations, who agree in no evil more universally than this. But remember, that an honest man's

word should be esteemed so sacred, that he should have no occasion to confirm what he says by an oath; besides, the reverence of a solemn appeal to God being diminished by common swearing, leads a man to perjury—a most confirmed piece of iniquity. It is plainly and directly forbid by the Christian religion; and the corruption of our nature suggests the fewest temptations to it of any vice whatever, which makes the practice of customary swearing more inexcusable. Avoid the company of common swearers; for conversing frequently with them will abate that horror we have at first for the rash and common use of oaths. If I mistake not, you have been preserved hitherto from this corruption; and let not the greatness or genteelness of those that practise it ever betray you to any good opinion of it. You must not imitate the best-bred men by their vices, which are no part of their good breeding.

XII. In the twelfth place, remember to be courteous and affable towards all men. They who exclude civility out of the catalogue of virtues, seem to me not thoroughly to understand the nature of Christianity. By this method you will preserve the good-will of those you converse with, which will make them the readier to serve you upon all occasions, and by degrees give you power to do them good in matters of the greatest importance. In time it will bring you to a habit of self-denial; for this affability will often make you forego what you like best in indifferent things, in order to please and oblige others; and it is no inconsiderable talent to be ready upon all occasions to contradict our own wills; besides, it is a part of that charity we owe to our neighbours, to whom we are obliged to do good by all the means that lie in our power, and certainly every man is delighted and pleased in being well used.

XIII. In the thirteenth place, I must particularly recommend to you the practice of charity; by which I mean doing good to the souls and bodies of men. It is true, God has set apart a particular order of men to be useful and serviceable to others in the great affair of their salvation; and there are several holy actions which are peculiar to the priests of the Lord, which

for a layman to invade would be sacrilege. But there are some others which are common to both: every man may instruct his children and servants in the principles of religion, and reprove others when they transgress, and upon fit occasions insinuate exhortations to piety; nay, I think it their duty so to do. But if my children or servants want baptism, I must call for a minister; if I would have them confirmed, I must carry them to a bishop, to lay his hands on them and bless them; if they would receive the holy sacrament, or absolution for any sin that troubles their consciences, I must apply to the priests that wait at the altar; if I would consecrate a child to the service of the Church, I must desire a bishop to ordain him, because they only are entrusted with that power. But, when you have servants, endeavour to instruct them in necessary Christian knowledge; lead them by your repeated advice, as well as example, in the practice of religion. Comfort your friends that mourn and are afflicted with seasonable discourses of piety; and reprove prudently and gently all your companions, when you find they transgress God's laws. But never unnecessarily vex or grieve any man's mind, for thereby you hurt his soul. As to their bodies, you must, according to your abilities, relieve their wants, and supply their necessities; and, in order to this purpose, I must suggest to you what I take to be a prudent management; which is, to dedicate and lay apart a proportion of your gains or your income, when it is certain, for alms-deeds, which will make the work easy and delightful, and you, moreover, ready to embrace any opportunity that offers for doing good, because you are beforehand provided with the means. The ways of exercising this sort of charity are as various as those wants the body labours under; as feeding the hungry, clothing the naked, visiting the sick and those in prison, redeeming those in slavery and captivity, and comforting such as are under any oppression. These good works, according to your ability, the Christian religion obliges you to; you are farther provoked to them by the example of our Lord and Saviour, who went about doing good; and at the

day of judgment the particular inquiry will run upon these heads which I have mentioned, as you may see in the xxv. of St. Matthew, and the reward or punishment will then be assigned according to those rules.

XIV. In the fourteenth place, I must caution you against gaming; hoping it will never make any considerable part of your diversion. When once it is loved, it consumes a great deal of time, which is too precious to be thrown away at that rate; the night by this means is turned into day, and the day into night. When men play deep, they venture the ruining of themselves, or, at least, win from others what should maintain their families; which cannot be justified. This has so inverted the order of the world, that it hath brought footmen into coaches; and has made them walk on foot that before kept them. It raises all those passions which it is the business of Christians to subdue, and often creates such quarrels as end in murder. If you should sometimes divert yourself this way, avoid games of chance, for they are the most bewitching and the least under government; and when you play at games of skill, never sit too long at them, nor venture much money, nor engage with such as are violently passionate. I wish in your diversions you would aim at health as well as pleasure; which you may reap from walking, riding, shooting, or bowling; always remembering that diversions are for refreshment, not for an employment.

XV. In the fifteenth place, I must press upon you the constant use of the means of grace; such as are prayer, reading the holy Scriptures, receiving the blessed Sacrament, self-examination, meditation, observation of the Lord's day, and other feasts and fasts of the Church. Some men deceive themselves, indeed, by placing all religion in these performances; and some, on the other hand, deceive themselves by thinking they are above them; but if you really design the end, which is piety, and virtue, and holiness in all your conversation, you must make use of those means, and that frequently, which God has prescribed for that purpose. You may as well pretend to

grow rich without diligence and industry, as to be truly good without praying and receiving the Sacrament.

The grace of God is necessary to enable us to do every thing that is good, and to strengthen us in resisting every thing that is evil; and how can we ever hope for such necessary and powerful assistance, except we seek for it in the ways of God's appointment? I must therefore entreat you to be constant to your morning and evening devotions in your closet, to perform them with great seriousness and application of mind, remembering always that great Majesty to whom you address; and at such times it will be very useful to read some portions of the Scripture, especially if you consult some good paraphrase or comment upon it. Take all opportunities that are consistent with your business of attending the public prayers, which are most acceptable to God, as tending most to His glory; and always upon such occasions behave yourself with great reverence and devotion, considering that you are after a particular manner in the presence of God. Stand, sit, or kneel as the Church directs in her rubrics; never talk nor gaze about in the church, as it is too common, to the great scandal of Christians; endeavour to correct this ill custom by a contrary carriage, that your example may rebuke and reprove such careless and negligent worshippers. Never turn your back upon the holy Communion; when all things are prepared for the celebration of the holy mysteries, let no pretence of your own unpreparedness excuse your attendance. If you live, and I hope you will, as it becomes a Christian, you can very seldom have a just reason for your absence. "Draw near," therefore, to the holy table with great humility and devotion, "and take the holy Sacrament to your comfort." The opportunities of receiving abroad offer but rarely, which makes it very inexcusable if ever you omit any that present themselves. Pay a particular regard to the Lord's day, commonly called Sunday; distinguish it as much by your practice as it is by divine institution; attend the solemnities of religion in public at such times; this I look upon as of indispensable obligation, and not to be omitted but in

cases of great necessity. Let the rest of the day be dedicated to pious and devout employments. This seems peculiarly necessary to men of business and traffic; because, being intent all the week long upon their worldly concerns, they really stand in need of recollection and retirement for the improvement of their minds, which the circumstances of Sunday are very proper to promote. Not that I would have you superstitious in the observation of it, making that absolutely necessary which is necessary only as a means; and, therefore, when you are accidentally by company prevented in your method, grow not sullen and morose; rather endeavour to season the conversation with hints of piety, and dexterously introduce such topics of discourse as may make the conversation suitable to the day; but, if possible, let not company deprive you of those advantages you may receive from retirement at such times. You must needs think that I reckon the observation of the festivals and fasts of the Church of great advantage to the Christian life, or else I should not have troubled the world with so large a book upon that subject; to which I refer you for my thoughts in that matter, desiring you to read a chapter in it, as the particular days occur, throughout the whole year. As to self-examination, the oftener you perform it, the less trouble and time it will take up; so that, if you would accustom yourself to recollection every evening before you say your prayers, you would easily know the state of your mind, by running over the actions of the day past, which would discover any false step that you had made, and which required a particular repentance.

Never delay this work beyond once a week; you may choose Sunday for that purpose, as the time you are surest to command: keeping accounts fair and clear has as great efficacy in our spiritual affairs as in our temporal and worldly concerns. When you read any book upon a religious subject, accustom yourself to reflect upon what you have read, that you may perceive whether it enlightens your understanding, or influences your will, or warms your affections; for the business of meditation is to digest that spiritual nourishment we take in by

reading. Without this practice, much learning and reading turns to little account. I have provided you with a collection of books, from which I am sure you may be thoroughly instructed in all necessary Christian knowledge, excited to the practice of all Christian graces and institutions, and furnished for the exercise of that devotion that is necessary for you, in private and in public, upon most of the occurrences in life. But I must freely tell you, that these books will not work as charms; if they serve but for the ornament of your closet, they will only administer to vanity. They must be read attentively, and seriously considered, if you design that advantage I have aimed at in making the collection. There is one thing I must observe to you before I conclude this head, that, by reading Archbishop Tillotson's works with care and observation, you will not only learn true notions of religion, but also the way and manner of writing English correctly and purely. His style I take to be the best standard of the English language; therefore, if you would perfect yourself in what is so necessary for a gentleman and a man of business, I mean writing well, observe his phrases, and the propriety with which he uses words, and the clearness with which he expresses himself on all subjects.

XVI. In the sixteenth place, I cannot conclude these particular heads without putting you in mind of being constant to the communion of the Church of England. Abroad you may meet with solicitations to popery; but the Church of Rome very falsely pretends to be the Catholic Church; at best she can only arrive to be a very corrupt part of it. At home you may be tempted to countenance the separation; but you cannot communicate with the Dissenters without incurring the guilt of schism. The Church of England not only believes the Scriptures to be the rule of faith, but professes her faith in all those ancient forms of words called creeds, which the primitive Church made use of; to which the Church of Rome has made great additions, and requires her novelties to be believed as necessary articles of faith, though the Scriptures and primitive

antiquity are silent concerning them, and in some points expressly against them. Their errors in doctrine are aggravated by considerable corruptions in her public offices, which are not only in an unknown tongue, and consequently no way edifying to the people, but are in some parts addressed to saints and angels, contrary to Scripture and the practice of the primitive Church. And yet farther, she has established an absolute monarchy in the Church, by clothing the bishop of Rome, commonly called the pope, with such prerogatives as are inconsistent with the rights of other bishops, which are established by divine right. The Church of England, moreover, preserves the three orders of bishops, priests, and deacons, in a due subordination, as instituted by our Saviour and His apostles; whereby she is secured of a right and truly canonical ministry, and consequently her people furnished with valid sacraments. Now, the Dissenters have rejected this divine subordination of Church-officers; and, by throwing off episcopacy, as their ministers have no lawful commission, so their people cannot be assured of the validity of ordinances administered by such teachers. So that, you see, in one communion, errors in faith corrupt the doctrine of the Church; and in the other communion, errors in polity and government destroy the unity of it; both which endanger salvation; and therefore I recommend to you the Church of England with greater earnestness, because free from both these fatal inconveniences. There is another thing wherein the Church of England has gloried as her particular characteristic; that she teaches sincere obedience and uncorrupted loyalty to princes; that we ought to pay them that obedience our constitution requires, and upon no pretence whatever to resist them by taking up arms against them, which is what is called rebellion. This her homilies teach, which contain good and wholesome doctrine; and this the laws of the land bind firmly upon us; for they place the power of the sword in the king, and no man can draw it but by commission from him (see the militia act of Charles II.). And if subjects have never so good reason to take up arms against the crown,

if, for want of success, they ever come to a fair trial according to the laws, they must be found guilty of high treason, their own friends being upon their jury. The laws are so plain in this case, that they have afforded no manner of remedy to the subject in those extraordinary cases that are urged. So that non-resistance and passive obedience is the doctrine of the Church and State. I am sure the primitive Christians professed it, even when they felt the bad effects of it in this world, by suffering wrongfully, contrary to the laws of the state, and even to the rights of human nature. The papists and presbyterians have been both tardy in this point; and I wish the practice of some in the Church of England had been more blameless; but, as long as her homilies and her laws continue unaltered, it cannot be said that either Church or State avows such doctrines. But these differences between the Church of England, the Roman Catholics, and Dissenters, and the other subjects I have hinted to you in this letter, are largely explained in those books I have recommended to your perusal; and therefore I shall add no more concerning them.

I must only put you in mind, that, by conversing with those that are strangers to the name of Christ, you are under a more particular obligation of living according to the maxims and rules of the Gospel; for otherwise you will bring a scandal upon the Christian religion, and expose the doctrine, as well as the person, of the blessed Jesus to the scorn and contempt of Mahometans and heathens; and woe be to that man by whom offences come!

As to the particular rules that relate to travelling, you will have no occasion for them at present; because you are to go by sea to Smyrna, where you are like to reside for some time. It is very probable your return may be through Italy and France; or at least I wish you may take those countries in your way home, and by that time your own good understanding will be so ripened by experience, that you will be sufficiently able to guide and direct yourself. I will, however, suggest to you a few thoughts on that matter before I conclude.

1. First, never set yourself to find fault with the different customs of other countries. This certainly proves you to be a novice, and is the surest method to disoblige the natives, whose friendship and kindness you stand in need of. It is your business indeed, among other things, to observe their customs, that you may compare them with your own, in order to consider on which side the advantage lies. But if you have reason to prefer your own, never treat theirs with scorn and contempt. For this reflects upon those that use them, and will certainly provoke their indignation against you; it will make them despise you, shun your company, and deprive you of the advantages you might receive from their conversation. And notwithstanding the unreasonableness of this practice, nothing is more common among young travellers, and therefore fit to be hinted at.

2. Secondly, I must carry you a step farther; which is, to conform yourself as much as you can to the customs of those with whom you reside. All mankind are fond of their own ways and methods of living; and as they think themselves wiser than others, so consequently they determine their own customs to be best. Now, your giving in to their ways and manners flatters their self-love, and will incline them to be desirous to oblige you; besides, they will have a better opinion of your understanding, when you approve of what they have established. This will raise your character; and according as they value and esteem you, so in proportion you will receive the testimonies of their kindness and respect. Besides, I cannot tell but that in this method you may best preserve your health: for different climates require different managements; and it is to be supposed, that the long experience of the natives must have found out that regimen which best secures health. I am very sure gentlemen have destroyed themselves by eating flesh and drinking wine with the same freedom in hot countries as they have been accustomed to in their own colder climes; and therefore could not forbear giving you this direction.

3. Thirdly, endeavour to be acquainted with men of the best character in all the countries through which you pass; by which I chiefly mean, men distinguished for learning, wisdom, and virtue; from whose conversation your mind will receive the greatest improvement, and from whom you will learn what is fittest to be seen, and what is most proper in that place to entertain the curiosity of a stranger. Besides, their acquaintance will procure you respect from others; for being observed to frequent such men, it will be imagined that you have some of those good qualities yourself which you admire in others. But this advice does not only refer to wise and learned men, but also to those of the best rank and quality, who in all countries are most polished in their manners and behaviour; so that you will never be able to make a true judgment of any country, if you do not know how people of quality live, as well as those of the middle and inferior rank. Strangers generally employ themselves more in seeing sights and rarities than in knowing men; but as the first should not be neglected, so in travelling the greatest stress should be laid upon the latter, which the want of knowing the language of the place often prevents; and therefore a traveller should make it his business to be perfect in the language of the place, without which it is impossible he can make any great improvements. But be sure, while you are intent upon acquiring ornaments of good breeding, never forget nor forfeit those qualifications that constitute the good Christian. First, take care to be a good man, and then you cannot be too fine a gentleman: when you have secured "the pearl of great price," you will do very well to set it to the best advantage.

And because I am sensible of the great weakness of human nature, and of the strength of those temptations you may meet with, to the advice I have given you I shall add my hearty prayers to God; that His grace may constantly accompany you; that by His holy inspiration you may think those things that are good, and that by His merciful guiding you may perform the same; that your life may be long and happy; that

prosperity may never corrupt you, and that affliction may always make you better; and that all your ways may be disposed towards the attainment of everlasting salvation; that, among all the changes and chances of this mortal life, you may ever be defended by God's most gracious and ready help, through Jesus Christ our Lord; to which well-weighed petitions of the Church, a most hearty amen is affixed by,

Dear cousin,

Your most faithful friend and humble servant,

ROBERT NELSON.

27*th July*, 1708.

Author's Preface.

Among the many worthy attempts that have been made to retrieve the piety and devotion of the primitive times, the promoting frequent communion has had no inconsiderable influence; and as this ancient practice recovers its true perfection, we may reasonably expect that the wonderful effects of it will appear in the lives and conversation of Christians.

The duty itself seems at present much better understood than it was formerly, when many very unwary discourses upon the subject rather discouraged than excited men to the performance of it. The preparation was looked upon as so difficult and burdensome, and so great a perfection of piety required in the receivers, that all sincere beginners in religion were inclined to think that the sacred institution no ways related to them; and the men of

business, though otherwise very serious, were of the opinion that so much more retirement was necessary than they could spare, that not being able to prepare themselves according to such schemes, they altogether laid aside the duty, and reserved the Holy Communion for their *viaticum* in their last hours; which, though an admirable means to settle and secure the pardon and peace of such penitent souls as have frequented the altar in the time of their health and vigour; yet, I am afraid, will but little avail those who have wilfully neglected it all along in life.

Now, if Christians did but seriously consider, that the best preparation for celebrating the holy mysteries consisted in a constant care to govern their lives by the precepts of the Gospel; and that it was sufficient if they approached the Lord's table with honest and devout minds, heartily and sincerely resolving to amend their lives, and truly willing and desirous to use all means to become better; it is impossible, I say, if men's minds were possessed with this right notion of the matter, and that they really designed to be true to their Christian professions, but that they should embrace all opportunities of receiving the holy sacrament, and lament

every reasonable cause of their absence as a great misfortune, because it is the best means to enable them to discharge their duty. And indeed the religion we live by, is the religion we must receive by; though the methods many men take upon these occasions tempt one to believe that they think there is a great difference between them.

For my part, I could never discover any duty, supposing one instructed in the nature of this holy action, that a man was obliged to, before receiving the Holy Communion, that was not his duty, some time or other, though be forbore communicating. For the Holy Sacrament does not so much oblige us to new duties, as enable us to make good those obligations which the profession of Christianity has already laid upon us.

They that are acquainted with ecclesiastical history know very well, that the Eucharist in the purest ages of the Church made a part of their daily public service; and when the devotion of Christians began to decline, they yet always upon the Lord's day celebrated the Christian sacrifice. Our second service at the altar seems defective without a conformable practice to antiquity in this point; and the holy exercises of the Lord's day appear to want their due

perfection without these eucharistical devotions. To this purpose our Church has encouraged a constant weekly communion, by permitting it to be celebrated where three or four persons are ready and willing to communicate; as being assured by our Saviour, that where two or three are gathered together in His Name, there He is Himself in the midst of them. And if the parochial minister should begin with such a small number, it is likely they would quickly increase; at least it will demonstrate his own zeal to shew forth the Lord's death, and may bring a blessing upon his parish, as well as upon the other labours of his holy function.

Rubric after Communion.

In order to quicken the establishing of this primitive devotion, I cannot forbear suggesting an observation made by several of the reverend clergy, who have been zealous in this matter, viz. that where communions have been frequent, the number of communicants hath sensibly increased; which, I think, ought to be no small encouragement to have the holy mysteries celebrated in all parish churches every Lord's day; because this shews a great disposition in the laity to be brought to a sense of their duty, and consequently must animate the zeal of their pastors to give them such frequent opportunities of

commemorating the death and passion of our blessed Saviour.

To this holy end and purpose I have endeavoured by proper arguments to press the duty of frequent communion upon the consciences of men; for all those motives that persuade us to communicate at all, ought to prevail upon us to do it often; and it appears to me very plain, that no sincere Christian, not otherwise lawfully hindered, can justify going out of the church when the Christian Sacrifice is celebrated; nor is there any pretence or excuse sufficiently valid for a man that is in earnest with religion, to turn his back upon the holy table when the heavenly banquet is there prepared.

I have no design to push those forward that have pitched their tents in the quarters of the enemy; because being under the power of evil habits, their receiving, as well as their praying, must aggravate their crimes, and increase their condemnation; they cannot partake of the table of the Lord, and live and blaspheme as if they partook of the table of devils. And it is in vain to persuade such people to be converted, in order to make themselves fit to receive often, because this motive will make little or no impression upon those that are so destitute of

faith and the love of God. But I hope all such honest minds and candid readers, who have a just concern for the welfare of their souls, will consider so seriously the weight of those answers that are given to the most plausible objections against frequent communion, as to reform this neglect, if they have been hitherto guilty.

I have, moreover, set in its true light the great care our holy mother, the Church of England, has taken to prevent the profanation of the Lord's Supper; and did our own members govern themselves more exactly according to such admirable rules, or did those who differ from us more thoroughly weigh the excellency of them, we should hear no more of those objections they are wont to make against our discipline in this point.

I have particularly taken care to shew that this Christian institution was ordained, not only to put us in mind of those great blessings which our Saviour purchased for us by His death,—for what man that reflects upon his Christianity can easily forget them?—but that it was also established as a sacred rite, to supplicate God the Father by the merits of our Saviour's passion, representing to Him the symbols of His body and blood, that thereby He may become

favourable and propitious to us. This sense of it is agreeable to the holy Scriptures, as they were understood by those who lived nighest to the times of the apostles, and has been evidently proved so by the learned, judicious, and pious Mr. Mede.

I must freely confess that the sum and substance of the following Treatise was printed, in a catechetical form, in the chapter of the Vigils in the *Companion for the Festivals and Fasts of the Church of England;* but in great deference to the concurrent judgment of some worthy divines and laymen of my acquaintance, it now appears in another dress, with some enlargements, more easily to be purchased by all sorts of people. They were so indulgent to the composition which they desired, as to think it might be serviceable to the interests of religion: an argument which, I am willing to own, I was not able to resist; for I hope I shall be always ready to sustain the shock of the severest worldly censure when the providence of God offers me a probable opportunity of doing the least good.

To make it more effectual to that end, I have added upon this occasion the devotional part, which in some measure owes its original to the ancient liturgies of the Christian Church, which I have care-

fully perused, and have transplanted many a pious thought and warm expression from those sources into this private composure.

I am very sensible this subject has exercised the pens of many learned and devout persons; and though I think we abound too much with discourses upon the argument of preparation, wherein the substance of practical divinity is introduced as if it was only necessary at such times; yet I am of the opinion we cannot exceed in multiplying books upon the devotional part; the tempers and apprehensions of men being so different, that what does not affect one may touch another; and so that substantial piety and devotion are improving, too many instruments cannot be employed in advancing them.

ROBERT NELSON.

August 15, 1706.

CONTENTS.

PAGE

EXERCISE upon Confirmation 1

The obligations to receive the Holy Communion . . . 19

From the positive command of our Saviour . . . 22

From the nature of the duty 24

From the benefits annexed to it 26

The nature of preparation required 30

Consists in understanding the meaning of the holy rite 31

And by whom to be administered 40

In the exercise of several Christian virtues . . . 44

The objections against frequent Communion answered . 54

From unworthiness 54

From want of respect 57

From preventing the profit of it 58

From multiplicity of business 61

From the commands of the Church 63

The advantages of frequent Communion 66

The care of the Church of England to prevent the profanation of the Lord's Supper 68

Directions about the manner of receiving 73

As to the reverence of our bodies 74

As to the reverence of our minds 76

Devotions for the Altar 78

PAGE

A Prayer to prepare our minds for the devout celebration of the holy mysteries 78
Meditations upon the Sentences of Scripture used at the Offertory 82
A Prayer when we offer our alms 90
Meditations on the Sentences of Scripture after the Absolution 98
A Prayer immediately after Consecration 107
A Prayer before the receiving the Consecrated Bread, consisting of confession, and imploring pardon . . 108
A Prayer before the receiving the Consecrated Bread, consisting of petitions for the virtues of a Christian life 112
A shorter Prayer before receiving the Consecrated Elements, containing the affections of a devout Communicant 119
A Prayer when the Priest approaches to deliver the Consecrated Bread 122
A Prayer after receiving the Consecrated Bread . . . 123
When the Priest approaches to deliver the Consecrated Wine 124
A Prayer after receiving 125
An Intercession for all Estates of Men 128
A general Thanksgiving 131
A short Prayer when the Communion Service is ended . 139
Acts of Faith 141
Acts of Hope 145
Acts of Love 148
Acts of Conformity to the will of God 151
Acts of Virtue in relation to the Passion of our Saviour . 154
Acts of Humility 157
Acts of Contrition 160
Acts of Praise 164

PAGE

A Prayer which may be used at any time in the week before the Sunday or Holyday on which we design to communicate, and which may properly be annexed to our morning devotions at such times 168

A Prayer in our retirement, after we are returned home from the Lord's Table 171

A Morning Prayer for a Family 174

An Evening Prayer for a Family 178

Pater
non est
Filius
non est
non est
Deus
Spt'
Sanct'

Instructions

FOR

THEM THAT COME TO BE CONFIRMED,

BY WAY OF

QUESTION AND ANSWER.

Q. What is confirmation?

A. A solemn rite instituted by the apostles, wherein the bishop, by laying on of hands, and by fervent prayer and authoritative benediction, conveys to such persons, who, in the presence of God and the congregation, sincerely renew their baptismal vow, a farther degree of God's grace and Holy Spirit.

Q. What is the end and design of confirmation?

A. That baptised Christians should, by their own deliberate choice, take upon themselves that vow and promise which was made in their names by their godfathers and godmothers when

they were admitted members of Christ's Church; so that the confirmed person expressly consents to the baptismal covenant, and before God and many witnesses engages to perform his part of it.

Q. At what age is confirmation to be administered?

A. The Church of England hath not determined any certain age, but requires it to be done only to such as are come to a competent age; which implies, that none should be admitted till they understand the nature of the baptismal vow, which they then renew, and till they are capable of making a prudent and firm resolution of observing it.

Q. What custom was there among the Jews which bore any resemblance with confirmation?

Buxt. Syn Jud. cap. vii. A. The Jews were wont to bring their children before the congregation at thirteen years old, when they had learned the law, and the explication thereof, and their daily prayers; whereupon they were declared "sons of the precept," and henceforth they were to answer for their own sins, for which before the fathers, and not the children, had been responsible; and the rite ended with prayers and praises.

Q. What hath the Church of England declared concerning confirmation?

A. That it hath been a solemn, ancient,

and laudable custom, continued from the apostles' time, that all bishops should lay their hands upon children baptised, and instructed in the Catechism of the Christian religion, praying over them, and blessing them. Can lx.

Q. How doth it appear that this rite was used by the apostles?

A. We have the Scripture itself for the evidence of the fact; for when the men of Samaria had been converted and baptised, and had received the word of God, Acts viii. the apostles St. Peter and St. John were sent to confirm those new converts, to lay their hands upon them, that they might receive the Holy Ghost. And the disciples at Ephesus, after they had been baptised in the name of Jesus, were confirmed by St. Paul, Acts xix. 5, 6 who laid his hands upon them, and then they received the Holy Ghost. And further, the same apostle mentions as fundamentals, not only the doctrine of baptism, but the "laying on of hands," by which Heb. vi. 2 the ancient interpreters have always understood confirmation; which appeared so plain to Calvin himself, that it was his opinion, that this one place shews evidently that confirmation was instituted by the apostles. In loc.

Q. How does it appear that confirmation was not confined to the age of the apostles?

A. Because this solemn rite is highly useful and beneficial to the spiritual wants of Christians in all ages, who stand in need of the influences of God's Holy Spirit to the great purpose of sanctification; and was as such accordingly practised by them in all the succeeding ages of the Church, as appears by the testimony of fathers and councils, who in this matter speak as witnesses of a catholic custom.

Q. Give me some testimonies of this practice.

A. Tertullian, who flourished about fourscore years after St. John, and who is very careful in relating the practice of the primitive Church, tells us, "That after baptism succeeds laying on of hands, by prayer calling for and inviting the Holy Spirit." And St. Cyprian, who flourished about sixty years after Tertullian, hath this remark upon the history of the Samaritan converts: "The same thing," says he, "is practised among us, that they who are baptised in the Church are presented to the governors of it, the bishops, that by our prayers and imposition of hands they may obtain the Holy Ghost, and be perfected with the seal of Christ;" which is by confirmation to attain the highest order of Christians. St. Jerome speaks full to the point: "If you ask," says he, "where

De Bapt. c. 8

Epist. 73

Dial. advers Lucif.

it is written, it is written in the Acts of the Apostles; but if there were no authority of Scripture for it, yet the consent of all the world in this particular is instead of a command."

Q. What are the effects of confirmation?

A. In the primitive Church these effects were extraordinary gifts, such as were necessary then in the infant state of the Church; but upon the settlement of it, the Holy Spirit guides it by secret and invisible communications, which those receive who are qualified to partake of them in this regular and ministerial way; and they are those ordinary helps and assistances which are necessary for the performing the conditions of our salvation, which we cannot work out without the influences of God's Holy Spirit.

Q. Who is the proper *minister of* confirmation?

A. The administration of this rite was devolved by the apostles to their successors, the bishops of the catholic Church; for, though Philip the deacon had liberty both to preach and baptise, yet the apostles only had the power to confirm, as is plain by the history of the Samaritan converts: and therefore this rite is appropriated to the bishops, as being successors of the apostles in the government of the Church, in all the primitive records of Christianity.

Acts viii. 14, 15

Acts viii. 18.

Q. What ceremony is used in confirmation?

A. The laying on of the hand of the bishop upon the head of the person to be confirmed — a very ancient ceremony in giving of blessings, practised by the Jews, and made use of by our Saviour Himself, and adopted by the apostles, with prayer for communicating the Holy Spirit in confirmation, and which gave name to the whole office, which is called "the laying on of hands."

Matt. xix. 15. Acts viii. 17. Heb. vi. 2.

Q. What qualifications are necessary for the candidates of this holy ordinance?

A. Those who are brought to be confirmed ought to be thoroughly instructed in the nature of their baptismal vow, which they then renew, and of that obligation they lie under to perform it. They ought to be acquainted with the meaning of this holy rite, and whose office it is to administer it; they ought to have a competent degree of the knowledge of those Christian duties that relate to God, their neighbour, and themselves. And in order to these ends, it is advisable that they should some time before read over the confirmation-office.

Q. What particular preparation is necessary before confirmation?

A. The persons to be confirmed ought to examine themselves concerning those sins of omission or commission they have been guilty

of in thought, word, and deed; and to confess them to God, declaring their hearty sorrow and repentance for them, and earnestly begging God's pardon and forgiveness; to which they must add serious resolutions of living answerable to their Christian profession. And that their prayers and holy purposes may be effectual, they may do well to join fasting to them, that they may be the better disposed to receive the influences of God's Holy Spirit.

Q. Since you mention the necessity of making serious resolutions of living answerable to the Christian profession when you receive confirmation; pray what do you resolve in relation to those enemies that oppose your salvation — the devil, the world, and the flesh?

A. I resolve, by the grace of God, to be always upon the watch against those various ways in which each of them is likely to endanger my salvation; I resolve to use all fit and proper means to secure myself against those dangers, and particularly to fortify those weak places of my mind which my temper or circumstances of life render most exposed to them.

Q. What do you resolve in relation to the devil?

A. I resolve, by God's assistance, never to give my consent to any of those wicked thoughts which he may throw into my mind; nor to com-

ply with any of those temptations whereby he solicits me to sin; neither will I make use of those ways of consulting him which ungodly men have taken. And I particularly resolve to avoid all pride, malice, and envy, all treachery, lying, revenge, and cruelty, which are most properly the works of the devil.

Q. What do you resolve in relation to the world?

A. I resolve, by the help of God, not to do any thing unlawful in order to procure honour, riches, or pleasure; neither will I set my affections immoderately upon any lawful enjoyment. I resolve to contradict the evil maxims and customs, to avoid the bad company of a vain and wicked world; and to forego all worldly comforts and possessions, all my natural relations and my own life, whenever they stand in competition with my duty.

Q. What do you resolve in relation to the flesh?

A. I resolve, by God's help, to resist the unlawful desires of my own corrupt nature; to suppress all lascivious and wanton thoughts; to avoid all filthy and obscene discourse; and never to gratify my fleshly appetites, but with temperance and sobriety, and only in such a manner as is allowed by the law of God: and in order to this purpose, I will shun sloth and idleness,

which are common incentives to our carnal minds.

Q. What do you resolve in relation to your faith?

A. I resolve to be stedfast in the belief of the being of a God, which is evident from His making and preserving all things. I resolve stedfastly to believe, that in this one glorious Godhead there are three Persons, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost; that the second Person in the blessed Trinity, God the Son, took upon Him human nature, was born of a virgin, and died upon a cross, as a sacrifice for the sins of the world; that He rose again the third day from the dead, ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of God, and that He will come again to judge the quick and the dead; that this Son of God, our Lord Jesus, planted a Church while He was upon earth, and committed the care of it to His apostles, with a power to ordain others to succeed them in their office; that the Holy Ghost bestowed miraculous gifts upon the apostles to fit them to convert the world, and to bring all mankind into the Christian Church, in which forgiveness of sins, and eternal life after the resurrection of the body, are always to be obtained.

Q. Why do you resolve to believe this?

A. Because these, and all other points of

my creed, are revealed in the holy Scriptures by God Himself, who is infinite truth, and cannot lie; who is infinite love, and will not deceive me.

Q. What do you resolve in relation to your practice?

A. I resolve, by the help of Divine grace, to observe all those precepts which relate to God, my neighbour, and myself.

Q. What do you resolve in relation to God?

A. I resolve to pay my obedience to Him in a due and devout attendance on prayers, both in public and private, and on the holy sacrament. I resolve to own His bounty in all the good things I receive, and to submit patiently to His wisdom in all the afflictions I suffer. I resolve to reverence His holy name, never to use it lightly, nor to profane it by customary swearing, much less by false and faithless oaths. I resolve to reverence His holy word, constantly to resort to His worship, and to observe His day particularly set apart for it; and to shew a due regard to all things and persons devoted to Him, and commissioned by Him.

Q. What do you resolve in relation to your neighbour?

A. I resolve, by the grace of God, to be just in all my dealings, never to deprive him of his right by fraud or force; to be sincere in my

expressions, and to be true to my promises. I resolve to relieve his necessities according to my ability, and to be candid in interpreting his words and actions; never to slander him by false reports, or unnecessarily to publish his faults by evil speaking. I resolve to be meek and patient under all provocations, and to be ready to forgive all affronts and injuries; and to study to promote peace among all men. I resolve to love, reverence, and obey my natural parents; and to perform the several duties I owe to all my governors in Church and state.

Q. What do you resolve in relation to yourself?

A. I resolve, by the grace of God, to humble myself under a just sense of my own faults and defects, not to be puffed up with a vain conceit of myself, or with a contempt of others. I resolve to be chaste in all my thoughts, words, and actions; and to avoid every thing that may in the least have a tendency to uncleanness; to be temperate in the use of meats, drinks, and all other enjoyments, and to fly from all temptations to drunkenness. I resolve to deny myself, to keep my body under by fasting and abstinence, and to mortify my affections to the things of this world; and to be ready to part with any of the conveniences of life rather than forsake the ways of truth and righteousness.

Q. From whence appears the necessity of being sincere in these resolutions?

A. Because God, who knows our hearts, will reject our pretended dedication of ourselves to His service, if we engage only out of custom, and in compliance with the fashion of the world; and consequently will withhold His grace from us, since we render ourselves unworthy of the influences of it, by never really designing what we openly profess.

Q. What are the great advantages of confirmation?

A. It is a new engagement to a Christian life, and is a lasting admonition and check not to dishonour or desert my Christian profession. It tends to preserve the unity of the Church, by making men sensible, that they are obliged to communicate with such ecclesiastical superiors who are endowed with all those powers that were left by the apostles to their successors. And it is, moreover, a testimony of God's favour and goodness to those that receive it.

Q. How is it a testimony of God's favour and goodness to those that receive it?

A. Because His lawful minister declares, that God accepts their proficiency, and advances them into the highest rank of the faithful, by giving them a title to approach the holy table; and because God vouchsafes thereby to communi-

cate supernatural strength to encounter their spiritual enemies, and enables them to perform what they undertake.

Q. What care has the Church of England shewn for the effectual administration of confirmation?

A. Such is the wise discipline of our holy mother, that, both by her rubrics and canons, she trains us up by gradual steps for a worthy partaking of this holy rite. For in our baptism she requires sureties that shall engage for us, and give security for our Christian education in the communion of the Church; they being obliged not only to see us instructed in all necessary points of faith and practice, but to take care that, when we are fit, we be brought to the bishop for confirmation. Exhortat. at the end of Public Baptism.

Q. What farther care has the Church expressed in this particular?

A. The parish-priest or curate is particularly enjoined to catechise, to instruct, and examine the youth and the common people in the principles of the Christian religion, according to the Church Catechism. And the Church farther requires, that none be presented as candidates till they can give an account and reason of their faith, of which the minister who presents them is to be Can. lix. Rubric after the Catechism.

judge; and none are even then to be confirmed except the bishop approves of them. And to strike a greater awe in the candidates, they are solemnly charged to answer as in the presence of God and the whole congregation.

Rub. at the end of Catechism.

Q. Why is a godfather or godmother required for the person to be confirmed?

A. As a voucher for the sincerity of the parties they stand for, and to be a continual monitor to them to perform their vows, as well as a witness of their making the same.

Q. How hath the Church endeavoured to prevent any neglect in those that are intrusted with the administration of confirmation?

A. She wills and ordains, that every bishop, or his suffragan, in his usual triennial visitation, should perform in his own person this rite and usage; but if, through any infirmity, he is hindered from making his triennial visitation, he is charged not to omit it the following year, as soon as conveniently may be.

Q. What is the minister of the parish obliged to when the bishop giveth notice of a confirmation?

Last Rubric after the Catechism.

A. The minister of every parish is obliged to bring or send in writing, with his hand subscribed thereunto, the names of all such persons within his parish

as he shall think fit to be presented to the bishop to be confirmed.

Q. Ought confirmation to be received more than once?

A. It is not to be repeated, because this solemn renewal of our baptismal vow is sufficient by being once performed; and for farther supplies of grace we have hereby a title to receive the holy communion.

A Prayer before Confirmation.

To be used by those that are preparing for it.

Most merciful God, by whose gracious providence I was born of Christian parents, and early dedicated to Thee in holy baptism; make me thoroughly sensible, I beseech Thee, of Thy infinite goodness in bestowing upon me the blessed privileges of being made a member of Thy Church, a child of God, and an inheritor of the kingdom of heaven.

Grant, O Lord, that by the assistance of Thy grace, I may carefully and zealously perform all those conditions upon which Thou wert pleased to vouchsafe to me such inestimable benefits; that I may constantly resist the devil, and all those temptations by which he seeks to destroy

me; that I may renounce all covetous desires of honour, riches, and pleasure, and all those evil customs and maxims of the world which alienate men's minds from the love of God; that I may mortify the inordinate appetites of my own corrupt nature, of my own carnal mind; that I may believe all Thy holy revelations, and keep Thy blessed will and commandments all the days of my life.

And now, O Lord, that I am about to renew the solemn vow of my baptism, and publicly in Thy presence to ratify all those things I then promised by my sureties; I humbly beseech Thee to enlighten my mind with the knowledge and understanding of that solemn engagement I then made, and am now about to confirm; influence my will, and all the faculties of my soul, heartily and sincerely to perform it. Let not the many and grievous sins that I have committed deprive me of those assistances of Thy Holy Spirit which I now expect to receive; but, on my true repentance, let the precious blood of my Saviour wash away all my past sins, and grant that I may be enabled to mortify and subdue them for the time to come. And forasmuch as without Thee I am not able to please Thee, pour Thy Holy Spirit into my heart, that by His holy inspiration I may think those things which are good, and by His merciful guidance

may perform the same, through Jesus Christ our Lord, in whose blessed name and words I continue to pray, saying,

Our Father, &c.

A Prayer after Confirmation

Which may be said while others are Confirming, and may be added to the Evening Prayer of the party Confirmed.

BLESSED and praised be Thy holy name, O Lord, for those fresh supplies of grace which Thou hast been pleased to communicate to me.

Blessed be Thy name for those comfortable assurances Thou hast given me of Thy favour and goodness towards me. Blessed be Thy name for that privilege Thou hast now bestowed upon me of approaching Thy holy table, and of strengthening and refreshing my soul by partaking there of the body and blood of Christ.

Increase in me, O Lord, more and more the gifts of Thy Holy Spirit, that I may be wise for eternity, and make it the chief business of my life to please Thee in all my actions; that I may love and fear Thee above all things; that I may be just and righteous in all my dealings, and ready to communicate to the necessities of others; that I may keep a constant watch over

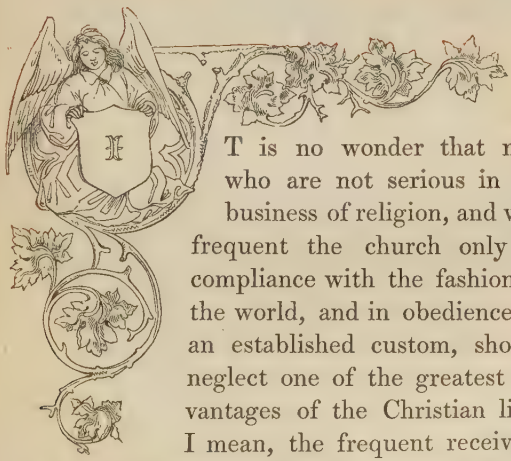
myself, so as not to exceed the bounds of temperance and sobriety.

Grant, O Lord, that my corrupt nature may be daily renewed and purified by Thy Holy Spirit, that no danger or persecution may affright me from my duty; that no pleasure may make me careless and negligent in the performance of it; and that under afflictions most grievous to flesh and blood, I may be entirely resigned, and submit to Thy holy will and pleasure. Let Thy Holy Spirit, O Lord, so guide and govern me through the whole course of my short life in this world, that I may not fail to obtain eternal life in the world to come, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

THE GREAT DUTY

OF

Frequenting the Christian Sacrifice.



IT is no wonder that men who are not serious in the business of religion, and who frequent the church only in compliance with the fashion of the world, and in obedience to an established custom, should neglect one of the greatest advantages of the Christian life; I mean, the frequent receiving the *holy sacrament of Christ's body and blood:* but that Christians, otherwise very devout, and not lawfully hindered, who have the fear of

God before their eyes, and who aim at pleasing Him in all their actions, should ever turn their backs upon His holy table, and when invited to commemorate the meritorious sacrifice of the death of Christ, should refuse to give such an easy instance of a thankful heart, is really matter of astonishment; because they do thereby neglect the most effectual means of growing in grace, and overlook the best method of attaining what they most sincerely purpose and desire.

I am apt, indeed, to think that this their bad conduct chiefly proceeds from the want of a true sense of their duty in this particular. Their great desire to perform an acceptable sacrifice to God fills their minds with lively apprehensions of the great danger of being unworthy communicants; so that they do not give themselves leisure to attend to those considerations that enforce the necessity of the duty, and therefore do not suffer their thoughts to dwell upon the great hazard they run in neglecting to execute a plain command of our blessed Saviour, which is more dangerous to their salvation than performing it after an imperfect manner. The duty, therefore, being indispensable, the just consequence we should draw from the danger of unworthy receiving should be, the necessity of exciting ourselves to great care and diligence

in preparing ourselves for the due discharge of it; but never to delude ourselves by false reasons into such a neglect, as will certainly increase our guilt and add to our punishment.

As for those who never partake of the holy communion during their whole lives, for fear lest their sins should receive a fresh aggravation by being committed after so solemn an obligation to be religious, it is plain they run into a very great error; for one main reason why sin becomes more heinous after repeated obligations to the contrary is, because it is committed with greater deliberation, and against clearer conviction. When, therefore, a man who believes religion, and understands the obligations it lays upon him, omits this duty for no other reason but that he may sin, as he thinks, with less danger, his sins are then equally deliberate, and against equally clear conviction; and he moreover adds to them a contemptuous neglect of one of the best means of becoming better.

In order, therefore, to make this short discourse more useful upon so important a subject, I shall reduce it to the following method:

First, I shall inquire into those obligations that lie upon all Christians to receive the holy communion, and to frequent the Christian sacrifice.

Secondly, I shall shew what preparation is

necessary to perform this duty after an acceptable manner.

Thirdly, I shall endeavour to answer some objections against frequent communion.

Fourthly, I shall lay before you the great advantages of frequent communion.

Fifthly, I shall shew the particular care the Church of England has taken to prevent the profanation of the Lord's supper.

Sixthly, I shall add some directions as to the manner of performing it, with suitable devotions on such occasions.

First, I shall inquire into those obligations that lie upon all Christians to receive the holy communion, and to frequent the Christian sacrifice.

The first argument for the performance of this Christian duty arises from the positive command of our Saviour Jesus Christ, the Author of our religion. It is from this Anointed of the Lord that we are denominated Christians, which implies a firm belief of those doctrines which He has revealed, and a stedfast purpose of mind to perform those precepts which He has commanded. We moreover solemnly promised, in our vow of baptism, to govern all our actions by the rule of His holy Gospel; therefore, to persist in the neglect of a plain law of our Lord and Master, sufficiently made known to us, is

no ways consistent with our engagement, nor with that character we profess, of being his disciples: besides, our obedience in this particular pays a peculiar regard to His authority; for this duty, being a positive injunction, receives all its force from His right to command. Now, that our Saviour has made it the duty of all Christians to frequent this commemorative sacrifice, is plain from the history of its institution, in the close of which our Saviour adds this positive injunction, "Do this in remembrance of Me." By which, as the holy apostles were obliged to do to others as our Saviour had done to them,—viz. to bless, break, and give the bread to all that joined with them in these holy services,—so were all Christians hereby engaged to receive from them and their successors those symbols of Christ's body and blood. By this precept, therefore, the communion of Christ's body and blood, as represented by bread and wine in the holy sacrament, is made the standing memorial of His death and sufferings in all Christian assemblies to the end of the world. St. Paul, who received from the Lord Himself what he taught concerning this holy institution, repeats the same command, "This do in remembrance of Me." And if we consider the circumstances of this command, it will still

Luke xxii. 19

1 Cor. xi. 24.

have a greater influence upon us; for it was given by our best Friend and greatest Benefactor, when He was about to lay down His life for our sakes: they are, as it were, His dying words to all His sincere disciples and followers, and therefore ought to be received with the greatest respect and deference imaginable. In pursuance of this precept, we find the first Christians did not continue more stedfastly in the *apostles' doctrine* than they communicated in prayer and *breaking of bread;* it being well known that the public worship, the *synaxis* of the ancient Christians, consisted of these three parts, of hearing God's word, of prayers, and of commemorating of Christ in the eucharist.

Acts ii. 42.

The second argument for the performance of this Christian duty arises from the nature of the duty itself. It is a piece of worship appropriated to the Christian religion, by which in a peculiar manner we profess ourselves followers of the blessed Jesus. The heathens and Mahometans offer up prayers and praises to God; and by the light of nature apply themselves to infinite Power for the relief of their necessities, and return their thanks to infinite Goodness as the source from whence they receive all their blessings. The Jews, by slaying of beasts and by burning incense, invocated God, and praised

and blessed Him for those mercies of which they partook; but Christians only set before God bread and wine in the eucharist, *as figures or images of the precious blood of Christ shed for us, and of His precious body*, as it is expressed in the Clementine liturgy. And therefore we cannot be said so properly to worship as Christians, as when we join in those sacred mysteries that Christ has made peculiar to His own religion: and it cannot be imagined that it should be at our own disposal whether we would perform it or no, when it was ordained as the peculiar service of Christians, to distinguish them from all other worshippers of the Deity, and as the principal act whereby we partake of the sacrifice of Christ made upon the cross, and without which our public service wants its due perfection; upon which account the primitive Christians (at least for a time in some places) on no day held their public assemblies without this Christian sacrifice. Justin Martyr, in his "Second Apology," instances in this sacred ordinance as a constant part of the Lord's-day service; and there is no great doubt but that each Lord's day was that *status dies*, that set time, on which Pliny tells the emperor Trajan the Christians in Bithynia met together, to bind themselves with an oath not to steal or rob, or withhold what was

Lib. x. ep. 97.

deposited with them, or commit any sort of wickedness. And long after, in the time of St. Basil, who commends a daily communion, he shews us how near the practice in his days came to it: The *Christians then not only communicated constantly four times a week, but on other days when they celebrated the memory of any martyr;* and the faithful that joined in all other parts of the public worship never failed in partaking of the blessed sacrament. What opinion the ancient Christians had of those that turned their backs upon this holy ordinance, may be collected from one of those canons which are called apostolical, whereby all the faithful that came to their public assemblies, and heard the holy Scriptures, and did not continue to partake of the holy sacrament, were liable to be separated from the communion of Christians.

Epist. 289. ad Cæsar

Can. 8.

The third argument for the frequent performance of this Christian duty arises from the great benefits that are annexed to the worthy participation of this holy ordinance. By the nature of our circumstances in this world, we are surrounded with variety of temptations, no condition of life being free from the assaults of our spiritual enemies; so that it but too frequently happens that we become a prey to their attempts, and are prevailed upon to transgress

our duty. Now when we are brought to a sense of our follies, and our souls are pierced with an unfeigned sorrow for having committed them, what surer method have we to procure our pardon from God than by "shewing forth the Lord's death," by representing His bitter passion to the Father, that so He would for His sake, according to the tenour of His covenant in Him, be favourable and propitious to us miserable sinners? We all know by fatal experience how unable we are of ourselves to do any thing that is good; but this heavenly banquet is the food and nourishment of our souls; it gives new life and vigour to our pious resolutions, and conveys power and strength to perform our duty. We are convinced that the satisfactions of this life can never complete our happiness; but this holy sacrament inspires a hope to be made equal to angels; and no less than the kingdom of heaven is hereby made our inheritance. So that a man must be very insensible of his own interest, that neglects one of the best instruments of advancing his spiritual welfare; and what can the concern of the whole world promise us, compared to the advantage of such gracious vouchsafements? Neither is it probable, that a man should retain a very grateful sense of those stupendous blessings purchased for us by the death of Christ, when he refuses

to give such an easy instance of a thankful heart. If, therefore, we pay any regard to the positive command of our Saviour; if we are concerned to proclaim to the world, that we are really the disciples of Jesus; if we are solicitous about growing in grace, and desire above all things the improvement of our minds in all Christian virtues, and breathe after a life without sorrow and without sin,—we must constantly attend this holy ordinance, from whence we may expect the pardon of our sins, and all the other benefits of Christ's passion.

And when we are once convinced of those obligations that enforce the practice of this duty, we must take care never to turn our backs upon His holy ordinance. The truest measure of our duty in this particular, is to be taken from those opportunities which the good providence of God affords to us for this purpose, there being no better way of determining the frequency of our obligation to receive, than this of God's giving us the opportunity. According to this rule the primitive Christians practised, who never withdrew themselves from the Lord's supper, when it made a part of the public worship: and it is in the communion of the sacrament as it is in the communion of prayers, and other parts of public worship,—we are bound to join in them when opportunities offer for the

performing them, and we are not otherwise lawfully hindered. Whoever, therefore, shall neglect to communicate, and retires from the holy table when the heavenly banquet is there prepared, either does not thoroughly understand his duty in this particular, or must be very defective in the performance of it; for, as the exhortation before the communion suggests to us, "Who would not think it a great injury and wrong done to him, if he had prepared a rich feast, and decked his table with all kind of provision, so that there lacked nothing but the guests to sit down, and yet that they who were called, without any cause should most unthankfully refuse to come?" And how can it be imagined that a man has a true love for his Saviour, or a grateful sense of His sufferings, that shall refuse to make a thankful remembrance of them, when our Saviour has commanded it, and the providence of God offers him the opportunity? I shall conclude this head with the judgment of two eminent fathers, St. Chrysostom and St. Ambrose, whereby we may guess at the sense of the Greek and the Latin Church in relation to this practice. The first, St. Chrysostom, delivers himself after this manner: "He who does not allow himself in the practice of any known sin ought every day to approach the holy table; but it is not safe

for him who has contracted a habit of sinning, and does not sincerely repent thereof, to communicate even upon the greatest festival." St. Ambrose gives us his opinion, by way of advice, in these words concerning the holy sacrament: "Receive daily what will be of daily advantage to you; so live, that you may be fit to receive every day: for he that is not fit to receive every day, is not fit to receive once a year."

Secondly, I shall shew what preparation is necessary to perform this duty after an acceptable manner.

When we speak of preparation for the holy sacrament, we suppose the candidates to have been educated in the belief of the Christian religion; that they have taken upon themselves the solemn vow made at their baptism; that they are instructed in what is necessary for a Christian to believe and practise; and that they have in some measure performed those engagements which they solemnly ratified at their confirmation. And therefore I think it very advisable, before any one makes his first communion, that he should consult the priest of his parish, that he may be satisfied how far he has complied with those obligations he has lain under to faith and obedience, and may be farther examined as to those qualifications that make a man a fit guest at the Lord's table. And then

the requisite preparation will consist in understanding what is the nature and end of that holy action, and in the actual exercise of such Christian virtues of which they are supposed to have laid a foundation in the former course of their lives.

The first part of preparation consists in the informing ourselves carefully in the nature and end of this sacred institution,—inquiring what is meant by this holy action, and to what purpose this blessed sacrament was ordained. This necessary knowledge, once attained, is a standing qualification in all our future communions; and therefore we ought to take the more pains to settle right notions in our minds concerning this matter, because they will be serviceable to us in all the remaining part of our lives. In order to this purpose, it will be necessary to read over the history of the institution of this Christian sacrifice, as recorded by the evangelists, and by St. Paul in his epistle to the Corinthians, who received what he taught in this matter by a divine revelation. St. Matthew's account of it is this, that as our Saviour and His disciples were eating the passover, "Jesus took bread, and blessed it, and brake it, and gave it to the disciples, and said, Take, eat; this is my body. And He took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it; for this is

Matt. xxvi. 17, 30; Mark xiv. 12, 24; Luke xxii. 7, 20; 1 Cor. xi. 23

my blood of the New Testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins. But I say unto you, I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom. And when they had sung an hymn, they went out into the Mount of Olives." St. Mark makes the same relation, and St. Luke and St. Paul concur in the same particulars, with the addition of this positive injunction, "Do this in remembrance of Me." From which places it will appear, that when our Saviour Jesus Christ celebrated the Jewish sacrifice of the passover with His disciples a little before His sufferings, He substituted the sacrament of His body and blood as the true Christian sacrifice, in the room of the passover; and ordained it as a rite to invocate His Father by, instead of the manifold and bloody sacrifices of the law, and to be a means of supplication and address to God in the New Testament, as they were in the Old. To which end our Saviour first offers up the creatures of bread and wine to God, as an acknowledgment of His sovereignty; by taking the bread and wine into His sacred hands, by looking up to heaven and giving thanks, and then by blessing the elements, He makes them the symbols of His body and blood, and distributed them to His disciples, to eat and drink them in com-

memoration of Him. So that the design of instituting the sacrament of the Lord's supper was to constitute a Christian sacrifice, wherein God mystically entertains man at His own table, in token of amity and friendship with him; which that he might do, the bread and the wine are offered to God, to acknowledge Him Lord of the creatures: and accordingly in the ancient Church they were laid on the holy table by the priest (as they are still ordered to be done by the rubric in the Church of England), and tendered to God by this short prayer: "Lord, we offer Thy own out of what Thou hast bountifully given us;" which by consecration being made symbols of the body and blood of Christ, we thereby represent to God the Father the passion of His Son, to the end that He may for His sake, according to the tenour of His covenant in Him, be favourable and propitious to us miserable sinners. That as Christ intercedes continually for us in heaven, by presenting His death and satisfaction to His Father; so the Church on earth in like manner may approach the throne of grace, by representing Christ unto His Father in these holy mysteries of His death and passion. That what every Christian does mentally and vocally, when he recommends his prayers to God the Father through Jesus Christ, making mention of His death and satisfaction,—

that, in the public service of the Church, is done by this rite, which our Saviour commanded in commemoration of Him.

The *incense* and *mincha*, or the offering prophesied of by Malachi (i. 11), whereby God's *name was to be great among the Gentiles*, is applied by the primitive fathers to this Christian sacrifice or solemn worship in the eucharist, taught by our blessed Saviour to His disciples, to be observed by all that should believe in His name. The *incense*, which denotes the prayers of the saints, representing the spiritual part of the Christian sacrifice, which is prayer, thanksgiving, and commemoration,—the *mincha* or offering representing the material part thereof, which is a present of bread and wine, which may very well be called a pure offering, not only in respect of Christ, whom it signifies and represents — who is a sacrifice without all spot, blemish, and imperfection — but in respect of that purity of conscience and freedom from malice with which it was to be offered. For it is in that singular purity, that the Christian oblation differs from that of the Jews, who were not prohibited to offer sacrifices and other gifts though they were at enmity with one another. And it is reasonable to think, that the ground for introducing the kiss of charity in the apostolical times was, that Christians might express

their mutual love and freedom from malice when they approached the altar.

The ancients held the oblation in the eucharist to be answerable in some respects to the legal sacrifices. They believed that our blessed Saviour ordained the sacrament of the eucharist as a rite of prayer and praise to God, instead of the manifold and bloody sacrifices of the law. That the legal sacrifices were rites to invocate God by, and for praising and blessing Him for His mercies, is evident from Scripture. Instead, therefore, of slaying of beasts and burning incense, whereby they praised God and called upon His name under the Old Testament, our Saviour, under the New, appointed this sacrament of bread and wine, as a rite whereby to give thanks and make supplication to His Father in His name. That as the legal sacrifices were types and shadows of the great sacrifice on the cross, and had a relation to Christ that was to come, so the Christian sacrifice of bread and wine looks back and has a relation to Christ that was crucified.

1 Sam. vii. 9, xiii. 12. Ezra vi. 10. Psalm xx. 3. 2 Chron. xxix. 27

There was also among the Jews an ancient tradition,* as has been observed by learned

* Theodorus Bibliander, lib. ii. de S. Trinitate :— "Erat apud veteres Hebræos dogma receptissimum, in adventu Messiæ benedicti cessatura esse omnia legalia

men, *that in the time of the Messias all sacrifices should cease but that of bread and wine.* And this oblation of the bread and wine is implied in St. Paul's parallel of the Lord's supper, and the sacrifices of the Gentiles: "You cannot," says he, "be partakers of the table of the Lord and the table of devils," because they imply contrary covenants, incompa-

1 Cor. x. 21

sacrificia, tantumque celebrandum sacrificium *Thoda:* gratiarum actionis, laudis et confessionis, et illud peragendum pane et vino; sicuti Melchisedec, rex Salem et sacerdos Dei altissimi, temporibus Abrahami, panem et vinum protulit."

Vox Hebræa significat laudem vel gratiarum actionem.

The truth of this farther appears, not only from the testimony of R. Kimchi, cited by the learned Bishop Hooper, but from the *Bereschit Rabba*, that is, the larger commentary of the Jews upon Genesis, where R. Phinehas is quoted, upon the 28th of Numbers, speaking these words: "Tempore Messiæ omnia sacrificia cessabunt, sed sacrificium panis et vini non cessabit, sicuti dictum est Gen. xiv.: Et Melchisedec rex Salem protulit panem et vinum. Et Melchisedecum rex Messias excipiet à cessatione sacrificiorum, sicuti dicitur Psal. cx.: Tu es sacerdos in æternum secundum ordinem Melchisedec."

Rabbi Johai also, upon the same chapter of Numbers, speaks to the same purpose: "Tempore Messiæ omnia sacrificia desinent; sacrificium verò panis et vini nunquam desinet;" which he endeavours to confirm by several texts of Scripture.

tible one with the other. Now here it is manifest, that the table of devils is so called because it consisted of meats offered to devils, whereby those that eat thereof eat of the devil's provision; therefore the table of the Lord is called His table, not only because He ordained it, but because it consisted of meats offered to Him. The author of the epistle to the Hebrews, St. Paul, insinuates the same thing: "We have an altar," saith he, "whereof they have no right to eat which serve the tabernacle." By which it is plain, there was an altar in the Christian Church besides that in the Jewish temple, and consequently a sacrifice, not only the spiritual one of prayer and thanksgiving, but the material one of bread and wine, sufficiently signified by the word *eating*. The first Christian writer after the apostles, St. Clement, in his epistle to the Corinthians, uses the phrase, "offering the gifts" for the administration of the sacrament; and that the succeeding writers in the Christian Church observed the same style, is clearly proved by the learned and pious Mr. Mede, in his "Christian Sacrifice." Hence we may observe, that the holy sacrament consists of two parts: the *earthly*, which are the elements of bread and wine; and the *heavenly*, which is the power of the Holy Ghost

Ch. xiii. 10.

προσενέγκαντας τὰ δῶρα

Ed. Ox. p. 94.

descending upon consecration, and sanctifying the bread and wine, and invigorating them with the divine virtue of Christ's body and blood: for though, as Theodoret speaks, "The symbols of our Lord's body and blood, after the prayer of consecration are changed, and become other; yet they depart not from their own nature, for they remain in their former essence, and figure, and shape, and are visible and sensible, such as before they were." And the priest that officiated in the ancient Church not only rehearsed the evangelical history of the institution of this holy sacrament, and pronounced these words of our Saviour, "This is my body, this is my blood;" but he offered up a prayer of consecration to God, beseeching Him, "that He would send down His Holy Spirit upon the bread and wine presented unto Him on the altar; and that He would so sanctify them, that they might become the body and blood of His Son Jesus Christ:" not with respect to the gross *compages* or substance, but only as to the spiritual energy and virtue of His holy flesh and blood, communicated to the blessed elements by the power and operation of the Holy Ghost descending upon them, whereby the "body and blood of Christ is verily and indeed taken and received by the faithful in the Lord's supper." This prayer is

Dial. 2.

found in all the ancient liturgies; and some learned men have thought that St. Paul alluded to something of this nature, when he speaks of the *offering of the Gentiles* being made *acceptable* by the *sanctification of the Holy Ghost;* there being no less than five *liturgical* words in that text, as has been observed by learned men.

Rom. xv. 16.

And as this Christian sacrifice was designed to render God propitious to us, by representing to Him the merits of our Saviour's sufferings, so it was instituted to be a standing monument of the infinite love of our Saviour in dying for us; and by eating and drinking at God's table, according to Christ's appointment, to fix in our souls the memory of those invaluable blessings He has purchased for us, and to communicate to all worthy receivers the benefit of His sacrifice upon the cross; upon which account it is called *the communion of His body and blood:* and it was, moreover, ordained to be a band of union to knit Christians together in the same fellowship and communion. Thus the infinite love of Christ appeared not only in giving Himself to die for us, but in so far complying with the weakness of our nature as to "institute and ordain holy mysteries as pledges of His love, and for a continual remem-

Exhort. before receiving the sacrament.

brance of His death, to our great and endless comfort."

And since we live in an age that is inclinable to make all the inherent powers in the priesthood to be the effects of priestcraft; and that others take upon them to sign and seal covenants in God's name, who have received no commission to that purpose,—it will be fit for any man that prepares himself for this holy ordinance, to consider who has the power of *administering* this *holy sacrament;* whether laymen, as well as clergymen that have received their commission by succession from the apostles. This consideration, I am sure, will be of great comfort to the faithful members of the Church of England, which has preserved the ancient apostolical government, and the primitive orders in a due subordination, whereby they are secured of a right and truly canonical ministry.

Now to satisfy ourselves in these inquiries, we must observe, that in the first institution of this sacrament it was celebrated by our Lord and Master Jesus Christ. He blessed the bread and wine, and gave both to His disciples; and He Himself was, as the apostle calls Him, the *High-Priest over the house of God.* And, indeed, the design of the epistle to the Hebrews seems to be, to shew us the difference between the two covenants—the nature of the Levitical

and evangelical priesthood—what necessity there was of a change from the one to the other; that the evangelical was after the order of Melchisedec; that our Saviour was the High-Priest of that order; and that this *honour He took not to Himself, but was called of God* to it, as well *as Aaron was* to his. The sacrament being thus instituted, and the elements being consecrated by a priest at the first celebration of it, the apostles kept close to their Master's institution; being commanded to *do the same in remembrance of Him*, they consecrated the elements, and gave them to the people, as He before did to them; and the same did the bishops, their successors after them, and those that they appointed: and this was so constantly and universally practised in these early times, that one instance is not to be brought to the contrary.

Besides, the very nature of a sacrament requires commissioned officers for the administrations of it: for sacraments being seals of the covenant of grace — of that covenant between God and man which our Saviour purchased for us, and confirmed with His blood,—who can seal this covenant, unless such as are empowered by God to transact with us in His name? — on our part, to offer up our prayers and supplications to Him; and on His, to bless us, to absolve us from our sins upon repentance, and to seal

the pardon of them by admitting us to partake of these holy mysteries.

To this end the apostles were careful in providing good men to succeed them in their ministry. St. Paul was earnest with Titus to "ordain elders in every city;" and with Timothy, to "lay hands suddenly on no man:" and in his epistles to both, he describes — and that nicely too — the qualifications of those that were to be admitted to ecclesiastical orders. In the Church of Corinth there were prophets and teachers, helpers and governors, which were their bishops, priests, and deacons. Now, what need was there of this distinction, and of this great care and caution in conferring orders, if they had no particular powers to exercise, and that every layman had an equal right to dispense them? Our Church, in asserting the supremacy of sovereign magistrates, has declared, that the "ministering either of God's word, or of the sacraments," is not given to princes, because they are not invested with, nor have a sovereign disposal of, the power of orders.

Art. xxxvii

But the practice of the Christian Church from the beginning of Christianity sufficiently confutes the reasonings of *theists* and *enthusiasts;* and matter of fact is too solid and substantial an argument to be confuted by art and sophistry. St. Clement, in his epistle to the

Corinthians, tells us, "when the apostles planted Churches, they made the first-fruits of those they converted bishops and deacons over those that should afterwards believe: and that as the priests have the proper services appointed them appertaining to their ministries, so the layman is confined within the bounds of what is commanded to laymen." And in another place he speaks to this purpose, "All those duties which the Lord hath commanded us to do, we ought to do them regularly and orderly; our oblations and divine services, to celebrate them on set and appointed times. For so hath He ordained, not that we should do them at hap-hazard, and without order, but at certain determinate days and times; where also, and by whom He will have them executed, Himself hath defined according to His supreme will." St. Ignatius, who was disciple to St. John, and bishop of Antioch, in his epistle to the Smyrnæans (p. 6), is more express to this purpose. "Let no man do any thing," says he, "of what belongs to the Church without the bishop: let that eucharist be esteemed firm and valid which is either administered by the bishop, or by him whom he authorises. Wheresoever the bishop shall appear, there the people ought to be; as where Jesus Christ is, there is the Catholic

Ox. ed. p. 4, 89.

Page 87.

Cap. 40.

Church. It is not lawful without the bishop either to baptise, or to celebrate the holy communion; for whatsoever he shall approve, that will be acceptable to God, to the end that whatsoever is done may be regular and of force." And Tertullian testifies of the Christians of his time: "That as they did receive the sacrament of the eucharist in their meetings before day, so it was only from the hands of their bishops."

De Cor. Mil. cap. 3. Nec de aliorum manu, quàm præsidentium.

I would only desire those that are too apt to attack the Christian priests, as the rebellious priests did Moses and Aaron, by insinuating that "they take too much upon them;" and by demanding, "wherefore they lift up themselves above the congregation of the Lord;" to be mindful of their punishment; and to consider how severely God revenged their insolence in causing the earth to open her mouth, and to swallow up them and all their adherents.

Numb. xvi.

The second part of *preparation* consists in those *pious dispositions* of mind, which qualify us to receive this sacrament after a worthy manner, and make us fit guests at the Lord's table; and therefore when we plead the merit of Christ's death and passion before God the Father in this Christian sacrifice, it ought to be accompanied with a most thankful acknowledgment

of those great blessings our Saviour has purchased for us by His sufferings, and with a public proclaiming to all the world, the great sense we have of such invaluable kindness. With a hearty repentance for all the 'ns we have been guilty of in thought, word, and deed; for this was the end of His death, to reconcile us to God, by "turning us from our iniquities." Acts iii. 26. With firm resolutions of better obedience; for He gave Himself for us, "to purify to Himself a peculiar people zealous of good works." Tit. ii. 14. With an entire resignation of our souls and bodies to be a "reasonable, holy, and lively sacrifice unto Him;" for He has the justest claim to us, because He "purchased us at the price of His own blood." Pet. i 19. With a constant endeavour to make some proficiency in all the virtues of the Christian life, because He has obtained for us, by the merits of His sufferings, the grace and assistance of God's Holy Spirit, to work in us both "to will and to do of His good pleasure." Phil. ii. 13. With a readiness of mind to be reconciled to all those that have offended us, because "when we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son." Rom. v. 10. With hearty and sincere love and charity to our brethren, contributing

all we can to the relief of Christ's poor distressed members, by reason He was so liberal of His inestimable blood for us. Lastly, with the purity of our intention, sincerely aiming at, and designing to answer all those ends and purposes for which this holy sacrament was ordained; and not merely to comply with custom, and to qualify ourselves for a profitable employment.

But, then, it must be noted, that all these qualifications are the same that we are obliged to acquire by our baptismal vow, and are necessary in the course of a Christian life, and in the use of all other means of grace: for, except we confess our sins with an humble, penitent, and obedient heart, and are ready to forgive those that have offended us, and ask with faith, even our prayers and praises will find no acceptance at the throne of grace. Indeed, charity and good-will towards all men, was always thought so necessary a qualification for the celebration of this Christian sacrifice, that in the ancient church, at the very entrance thereunto, the Deacon was wont to proclaim, "Let no man have aught against his brother:" and this practice was founded upon our Saviour's ordinance, in His divine sermon upon the mount, "If thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath

Matt. v. 23, 24.

aught against thee, leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift:" which Scripture, in the sense of the primitive Church, was taken to be an evangelical constitution, implied by way of anticipation that our Saviour would leave some rite to His Church, instead and after the manner of the sacrifices of the law, which should begin with an oblation, as they did; and that to require this proper and peculiar qualification in the offerer, "to be at peace, and without enmity with his brother," insomuch that Irenæus seems to place that purity of the evangelical oblation, prophesied of by Malachi principally in this requisite: and besides this, the only duty the Scripture seems to make peculiar to the receiving the holy sacrament is self-examination. This is St. Paul's direction, "Let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread and drink of that cup;" which, if taken in the largest sense, for searching into the state of our souls in order to know how far we believe and practise what is required of us, and to amend for the future what has been amiss in our past conduct, is certainly obliging at other times, as well as before the sacrament; and it is impossible a Christian should govern

Lib. iv. cap. 34.

Chap. i. 11.

1 Cor. xi. 28.

his life with that necessary care and watchfulness that is required, without practising of it very frequently. And yet, I believe, if the sense of St. Paul be impartially weighed in that matter, it will appear that the examination he recommends, is not that of our state and condition towards God, and of our duty in general, but an examination of our manner of eating the Lord's supper by Christ's institution of it, to see whether our behaviour comports with the rules of the institution, and with the end for which it was instituted: for to remedy the disorders that were in the Church of Corinth in the administration of the Lord's supper, he sets before them Christ's institution of the holy sacrament, that they might acquaint themselves with the manner and end proposed in the partaking of it; so that by that every one might examine his comportment therein, whether conformable to that institution, and suited to that end. In the account St. Paul gives of Christ's institution, he remarks, that eating and drinking in the sacrament, was no part of common eating and drinking for hunger and thirst, but to represent Christ's body and blood, to be eaten and drank in remembrance of Him; or, as the apostle expounds it himself, "to shew forth the Lord's death." He moreover observes, that this was done by all who were present, united

together in one company at the same time. All which put together shews what the examination here proposed relates to; for the design of the apostle being to reform those abuses he found fault with in their celebrating the Lord's supper, it is by that alone we must interpret the directions he gives concerning it, if we will suppose he talked pertinently to the subject in hand, which was to reduce the Corinthians from the irregularities they were run into in this matter. And if the account of Christ's institution be not brought in for their examining their carriage by it, and their adjusting their comportment to it, it will be hard to find a reason for what purpose it is here mentioned.

From hence we may therefore gather what that unworthy receiving was, which is condemned in the Corinthians by St. Paul, and what was the punishment annexed to it. It was their disorderly and irreverent participation of the Lord's supper; it was their eating and drinking after an unworthy manner, without a due regard to the manner and end of that holy institution; without a due respect had to the Lord's body, in a discriminating and purely sacramental use of the bread and wine that represented it: it being the custom of the Christians in the apostolical times to receive the holy eucharist after their feasts of charity, wherein the rich and

the poor were wont to eat together with great sobriety and temperance. In the Church of Corinth this method was not observed; the poor were not admitted to this common feast: "for in eating every one taketh before other his own supper;" so that when some wanted, others were guilty of scandalous excess and gross intemperance: and the effect of it was, "they did not discern the Lord's body." They made no difference between the sacrament and a common meal, between what was to sustain their bodies and what was to nourish their souls. So that to eat the bread and drink of the cup in the holy sacrament, without a due and direct discrimination had to the Lord's body, by separating the bread and wine from the common use of eating and drinking for hunger and thirst, was to "eat unworthily." The punishment annexed to these miscarriages were infirmities, sickness, and temporal death, with which God corrected them, that they might not be condemned with the unbelieving world. By which it appears, that temporal judgments must be understood by the word our translators render *damnation:* though, if these temporal judgments had not produced amendment and reformation, such a contempt of holy things might have made them obnoxious to the eternal judgment of God.

Now, it appears farther, by the nature of these punishments, that the examination St. Paul recommends referred to the institution of the sacrament; for if the unworthiness here spoken of was either unbelief, or any of those sins which are usually made the matter of examination, it is to be presumed the apostle would not wholly have passed them over in silence: this at least is certain, that the punishment of these sins is infinitely greater than that which God here inflicts on unworthy receivers, whether they who are guilty of them receive the sacrament or no.

That, then, which makes a man absolutely unfit to receive the holy sacrament, besides ignorance of the meaning of that holy institution, is the living in the constant habitual practice of any known sin without repentance. Such a man's approach to the holy table would be a mocking of God, and a great contempt of His authority; and though the ancient discipline of the Church is at a low ebb among us, yet there is still power to debar such scandalous and open sinners the communion, and a particular order to parochial ministers not to admit such. But, then, it ought to be observed, that this impenitent state makes our prayers also an abomination to the Lord; for to profess ourselves sorry for our sins, and resolved to forsake them, when we have no

Can. xxvi.

sense of the one, nor are determined to do the other, is the greatest affront imaginable to our Maker — by supposing that either He does not know our hearts, or that He will be pleased when we draw near to Him with our lips, though our hearts are far from Him.

There is a case, indeed, wherein I think a man may be supposed qualified to attend the public prayers of the Church, and yet that it may be fit for him to abstain from approaching the altar; which is, when a man first rises by unfeigned repentance from a deplorable fall into some grievous sin: the first scene of his penitential sorrows should pass in the exercise of mortification and self-denial; and some time may be necessary to prove the sincerity of his return to his duty. And this is agreeable to the discipline of the Church in the primitive times, when whoever was found guilty of any scandalous fault was, according to the nature of the offence, debarred the communion a shorter or a longer time; so that it will very well become the modesty of a penitent, in these loose times, wherein the Christian discipline is relaxed, to exercise it upon himself,— it being reasonable that the sense of any heinous crime lately committed should so far humble and mortify us, as to make us ready and willing to impose this penance upon ourselves, as thinking our-

selves for some time unworthy to participate in the highest and most solemn act of religion.

In short, the best preparation for the sacrament is a constant endeavour to live as becomes that holy religion we profess. For they who really believe the Christian religion, and sincerely govern their lives by the doctrines and precepts of the Gospel of the blessed Jesus, have all that substantial preparation that qualifies them to partake in this holy ordinance, and ought to receive at any time when there is an opportunity, though they were not beforehand acquainted with it. Indeed, when they have a foresight of their communicating, it is very advisable they should trim their lamps, examine the state of their minds, renew their repentance, exercise their charity, enlarge their devotions, spiritualise their affections; and in order to this should retire from business and pleasure, as far as the nature of their circumstances will admit; that by prayer, fasting, and almsdeeds, their minds may be raised to relish spiritual enjoyments. But still great care must be taken that, when a man is habitually prepared, he does not impose upon himself so much actual preparation as shall make him lose an opportunity of receiving the holy sacrament, when he has not had time to go through with that method he has prescribed to himself.

Thirdly, I shall endeavour to answer some objections against frequent communion.

Object. 1. The first usual objection men make is, that they are unworthy to receive the holy sacrament, and consequently if they approach God's table they shall eat and drink damnation to themselves.

Ans. If this objection is made by such who live in a course of wickedness, it is certain, as long as they resolve to continue such, they are very unfit to approach these holy mysteries; while they are at open defiance with God Almighty, break all His laws, and refuse all offers of reconciliation, they ought not to be admitted as guests at God's holy table: and if the discipline of the Church were restored, which is founded upon the laws of Christ and His apostles, and sufficiently explained to us by primitive practice, such refractory sinners should be excommunicated, and thrown out of the community of Christians, and not be re-admitted till they had given public testimonies of their sorrow and repentance. But all men easily see the vanity of this excuse, because one fault can never justify the commission of another.

But if this objection is made by devout people, to excuse their not frequenting the Christian sacrifice, they must consider that this argument

pushed home, ought to hinder them from ever communicating: for if men take the word *unworthy* in a strict sense — for such persons as no way deserve those great benefits that are offered and conferred in the holy sacrament,— no man should ever receive at all, because no man deserves any thing at God's hands, much less those invaluable blessings purchased for us by Christ's death; and yet they that make the objection do venture at some great solemnities to approach these holy mysteries, which makes it wonderful how they can reconcile this their notion of unworthiness with their practice of receiving at such seasons, or else they must have at those times a better opinion of themselves than is consistent with Christian humility. But there is a great difference to be made between deserving that favour, and receiving that favour after a worthy and fit manner. We may have no merit to procure us such benefits as may be conferred upon us; and yet if we receive them with a great sense of gratitude, acknowledging the bounty of the Giver; with a great sense of our own demerit, owning they are infinitely above our deserts; with care and diligence to receive them in the way and manner prescribed, and with resolutions of making the best returns we are capable of,— we may be truly said to receive such favours after a worthy manner,

though we are never so unworthy of the benefits themselves.

The "unworthy eating and drinking," condemned by St. Paul in the Corinthians, has been already explained, with the punishment annexed to it; which will certainly, if seriously considered, abate those fears which but too often possess devout souls; and, if they are in earnest, will be able to turn their fears quite on the contrary side, and make them apprehensive of provoking God by neglecting a positive command of our Saviour's, by Him laid upon all Christians.

It is not to be supposed, that we must be perfect and strong-grown Christians before we partake of these divine mysteries: it is enough that we sincerely desire to be such; and if so, we shall find the frequent use of the holy communion to be the most effectual means to that purpose. We are here in a vale of tears; where should we seek for comfort, but from the source of all joy and satisfaction? We are surrounded with a multitude of temptations; where shall we find strength to resist them, but in this divine armory? We are loaded with many imperfections, and sometimes, by negligence or surprise, fall a prey to the tempter. What so proper to wash away our stain, as that precious, inestimable blood, which was shed to that very

end and purpose? So that the very sense of our unworthiness, if rightly applied, should quicken our zeal in approaching frequently, that we might become better.

Object. 2. Some object, that the frequent use of the holy sacrament may be apt to abate and diminish that reverence and respect which men ought to have for it.

Ans. This objection is founded upon the experience men have, that their familiarity and intimate converse with men and things in this world, is apt to diminish their value and respect for them; not considering that it is quite the contrary in spiritual things, the frequent use whereof is the likeliest means to increase our veneration and respect towards them. An uninterrupted enjoyment of the good things of this world may very well lessen our esteem of them, because it convinces us they do not administer that happiness which they promise; but the more we employ ourselves in spiritual exercises, we find they produce a satisfaction that rises above what we expected, or worldly men can imagine. The better we know men, the more we discover their frailties and imperfections: at a distance we see only the brightness of their good qualities, but a closer correspondence acquaints us with their failings; and therefore our familiarity with the best of men

may be apt to abate that respect we paid them at a distance, by reason of that mixture of frailty which accompanies their greatest virtues. But the oftener we converse with God in His holy ordinances, the more we shall admire His divine perfections, and the more we shall be disposed to conform ourselves to His likeness. For an object of infinite perfection in itself, and of infinite goodness to us, will always raise our admiration, and heighten our respect and esteem, the more we contemplate it; it being the discovery of some imperfection, of some flaw, where we thought there was none, that lessens our esteem, and provokes our contempt.

Object. 3. Others pretend, that the custom of frequent communion diminishes the profit and advantage that is to be reaped from that divine institution.

Ans. This objection is founded upon the unhappy temper of most men, who are apt to put the greatest value upon things that are rare and uncommon, and to neglect, or at least to perform actions of the greatest consequence after a slight and careless manner, when they frequently occur. But if the fear of falling into this weakness were a sufficient reason to abstain from frequent communion, it would hold with as much force against frequent prayer,

which the precepts of the Gospel make necessary; and, therefore, as in praying often, we at length learn to pray well, so in frequently receiving the holy sacrament, that fervour and appetite sensibly increases, which is so necessary to make us receive with advantage. If people reap no profit from their frequent communions, the fault must be laid upon the negligence of their lives, and upon the slight care they take in the examination of their consciences: and if, upon a strict inquiry, they find any secret sin unrepented of, any habitual neglect of their duty, this great bar to the influence of grace must be removed. And if, after that, they still make the same complaint, they must consider what they mean by unprofitableness; for it is certain, if we bring a right temper of mind, the body and blood of Christ in the sacrament is of great profit and advantage to us. If we are penitent, it seals to us the pardon of our sins; if we are sincere, it fortifies our resolutions; if we believe, it strengthens our faith; and if we are real and in earnest, it inflames our charity: but if we think it must cure us of all those imperfections which are inseparable from the frailty of our nature, we deceive ourselves. The best of Christians groan under the perverseness and impotence of corrupt nature. Or if we expect always those heavenly joys and

raptures which God is pleased sometimes to communicate to His faithful and devout servants, we are too presumptuous. God may deny us those foretastes of bliss, to keep us humble, and to quicken our industry to attain them; and if God does not communicate Himself to us after that way and manner our shallow reason thinks most desirable, it does not become us to lay any blame upon this divine ordinance; which is certainly in itself the most efficacious means to make us just and charitable, pious and devout. And they that owe their ardours at the altar to their seldom approaching the holy table, have too much reason to conclude they are more affected from the rarity and unusualness of the action, than from the divine virtue that flows from it: like those that converse seldom with men of great quality and title; the awe they feel of their greatness proceeds more from their not being used to frequent their company, than from the opinion of their true worth and dignity. So that these people seem rather to be under the power of nature than the influences of grace.

I am sure experience will inform us, that the devoutest ages of the Church were those wherein the practice of frequent communion most prevailed. Never was there so much fervour and strictness of piety, as when the faith-

ful met daily at the Lord's table. And in the accounts we have of the greatest saints, never any one excelled in the virtues of the Christian life, but what distinguished himself by frequently nourishing his soul with this heavenly banquet.

Nay, I dare appeal to those holy souls who live under a strict sense of their duty in this particular, and embrace all opportunities which the providence of God offers them to commemorate the ineffable love of their dying Redeemer; whether they do not find themselves more determined to be just in all their dealings, and readier to relieve the necessities of the poor; whether their affections to the world do not lose ground, and their desires towards heaven do not grow more intense and vigorous; whether their passions are not more calm, and their patience and submission to the will of God more evident and conspicuous; whether they are not sensible of less fondness for life, less earnestness for trifles, less desire of glory, less eagerness for profit, and less concern for whatever the world most esteems?

Object. 4. It is farther objected, that men of great business, either in public or private affairs, may justly be excused from frequent communion, because they have not leisure to prepare for it.

Ans. Any business, though lawful in its own nature, yet if prosecuted to such a degree as to take men off from the care of their souls, ought to be laid aside: because the salvation of our souls is of much greater consequence than any affair that relates to this world; and wise men proportion their care of a thing according to its worth; they do not spend their time upon trifles, and neglect what may be of the greatest consequence. I suppose they who make this objection design to be saved, and therefore must own that their souls are of greater worth than their bodies, and that they must certainly find a time to die, however careless and negligent they may be in making a due preparation for it. But, besides, the care of our temporal concerns and our duty to God are very consistent. A great deal of business and the duties of religion may stand together, provided we govern our affairs by Christian principles. For though such men have not leisure for so much actual preparation, yet they may have all that habitual preparation upon which the great stress ought to be laid in this matter. Nay, even the conscientious discharge of their business is an admirable qualification for receiving the sacrament. A man is serving God when he follows his calling with diligence, and observes justice and equity in all his dealings; when he manages

the affairs of the public with fidelity and honesty, without selling justice, without oppression, and without sacrificing them to his private interest. And the greater dangers and temptations he is exposed to, the greater need he has of God's grace and assistance, which is abundantly communicated in this holy ordinance. When we travel in ways frequented by robbers, we go well armed and unite companies, that we may be the better able to defend ourselves. So that the man of business, who has any serious thoughts of another world, ought more especially to lay hold on such opportunities, which may secure him against those dangers he daily converses with, and which may fortify him against those watchful enemies that lie in wait to destroy him. For as they who have leisure ought frequently to receive the holy communion, as the best improvement of their time; so they that are engaged in many worldly affairs ought to come often to the sacrament, and learn how to sanctify their employments.

Object. 5. Others think they satisfy their duty in this particular, if they comply with the command of the Church, which enjoins three times in the year, whereof Easter to be one, and so think themselves excused from frequent communion.

Rub. after the com. Can. xxi.

Ans. These objectors against frequent com-

munion quite mistake the sense of the Church in this injunction, who, in her exhortations, excites us to frequent communion, and therefore in most parishes invites us at least every month, and in some churches every Sunday and every holyday; especially in cathedrals, where all priests and deacons are enjoined "to receive every Sunday at the least, except they have a reasonable cause to the contrary." All that she says is, that Christians ought to communicate at least three times in the year, as if that was the *minimum quod;* that is, the least that is absolutely necessary to denominate us Christians, which if we neglect, we deserve to be separated from that body whereof Christ is the Head, and incur the censures of the Church, which when rightly dispensed are very terrible. I would fain know, if a physician should tell a man that just so much is absolutely necessary to maintain life—if he should eat less, he would not only endanger his health, but run the hazard of starving himself,—whether a man that confines himself to such a method would be thought to be in love with life; and whether those that have good appetites could subsist under such a discipline. It is just the same in our spiritual life; so many times communicating preserves us from being separated from the body of Christ, which is the

life of a Christian: except we are members of His body, we cannot in any ordinary way partake of the favourable influences of the Head. But this is not enough in order to our well-being. It is a sign that we are weak and very imperfect Christians, if we have so small an appetite for this spiritual food; it is a sign we have little relish for the things of God. Let us call to mind the fervours of the primitive Christians, who made the commemoration of our Saviour in the eucharist a constant part of their public worship. As the primitive piety decayed, so the means of maintaining it were less frequented; and it was the bad lives of Christians, and their total neglect of communicating, which made the Church oblige them to receive at some certain times, under the penalty of excommunication. And is it becoming a man that has any sense of the excellency of this Christian institution, any value for the privilege of being a disciple of the crucified Jesus, any care of his salvation, any desire of being perfect as God is perfect, to excuse himself from a necessary duty by an injunction which was introduced by the indevotion of negligent Christians? It is not enough that we are Christians—we must grow in grace, and the man of God must be made perfect; of which when we are once convinced, we shall

never neglect frequent communion, because it is the most effectual means of attaining it.

Fourthly, I shall, in short, lay before you the great advantages of frequent communion.

Our intimate converse with temporal things, and our familiarity with the delights and satisfactions of sense, is but too apt to take off our minds from serious thoughts, and to impair that vigour and resolution which ought to be employed about the one thing necessary. Now frequent communion keeps a lively sense of religion upon our minds, and invigorates them with fresh strength and power to perform our duty. It is the proper nourishment of our souls, without which we can no more maintain our spiritual life, than we can our temporal without eating and drinking.

As long as we carry these frail and sinful bodies about us, the world, the flesh, and the devil, those constant enemies to our true happiness, will be making perpetual assaults upon our virtue, and using their best endeavours to corrupt our innocence. Now frequent communion is the sovereign remedy against all their temptations, by mortifying our passions, by spiritualising our affections; for how can we yield to any sinful satisfactions that crucified the Lord of glory, or fix our hearts upon perishing objects, when God only deserves, as He requires, the whole man?

One of the great advantages of our Christianity consists in being made members of Christ's mystical body, by reason of those happy influences we derive from our Head; and our happiness depends upon our enjoying this blessed privilege. Now frequent communion preserves this spiritual union inviolable between Christ and all faithful Christians; by a mutual intercourse of goodness and compassion, in pardoning our sins, in strengthening our feeble virtues, and in communicating heavenly joys and foretastes of happiness; and on our side by repeated acts of adoration and thankfulness, of love and admiration, of resignation and submission to His holy will, and of sincere professions of constancy and perseverance in His service.

We are convinced by fatal experience, that either through surprise, or the strength of temptation, we cannot always stand upright; that we do those things we ought not to have done, and leave undone the things we ought to have done. Now this holy sacrament perfects our repentance, and ratifies and confirms to us the pardon of our sins; repairs those breaches which our follies have made in our souls; and applies to us in particular that satisfaction which our Saviour made upon the cross, and conveys to us the benefits of that all-suf-

ficient sacrifice, whereby God the Father is rendered favourable and propitious to us miserable sinners.

In this vale of tears, afflictions and calamities are often the lot of the best of men. Now where shall we find comfort under these difficulties, or strength to contend with them, but from that provision that is administered at God's table; from those sufferings which our Saviour endured for us, and no ways deserved Himself? For who can complain of affliction in any kind, that considers what necessary correctives they are of our follies, what noble improvements of our virtues, and what a testimony they are of our love and affection to the blessed Jesus, when borne with patience and submission; and that withal remembers, that his Lord and Master was made perfect through sufferings? Besides, from this divine nourishment we receive such comfortable impressions as make the troubles of this life lose their sting; and it supplies us with such inward delights as surpass all expression, and which are only felt by those that frequently make the experiment.

This is the most proper method to make our bodies temples of the Holy Ghost, and the most effectual means to fit and prepare our souls for the eternal enjoyment of God.

Fifthly, I shall shew the particular care the

Church of England has taken to prevent the profanation of these holy mysteries.

Such is the wise discipline of our holy mother, the Church of England, that both by her rubrics and canons she trains us up by gradual steps from our infancy, to a worthy participation of this Christian sacrifice: for in our baptism she requires sponsors, who shall stipulate for us, and give security for our Christian education in the doctrines of Christianity, and in the communion of the Catholic Church; they being engaged not only to instruct us in all the necessary points of faith, but are charged to take care, when we are fit, that we be brought to the bishop for confirmation. This is an additional security to that duty which nature and Christianity has laid upon parents, and a happy provision in case of their mortality. And not the sureties only, but the parish-priest or curate is particularly enjoined to "catechise, to instruct, to examine the youth, and the common people, in the principles of the Christian religion, according to the Church Catechism;" which Catechism is an excellent abridgment of all those things which are necessary to be believed and practised, in order to the welfare of our souls. And farther, the Church requires that none be presented to the

Exhort. at the end of public baptism.

Can. lix. and lxi

Rubric after the Catechism.

bishop for confirmation till they can give an account of their faith, of which the minister who is to present them is to be the judge; and not even then to be confirmed unless the bishop approves of them, which supposes some trial and examination on his part. To all this she prudently adds this important rule, "That none be admitted to the holy communion until such time as he be confirmed, or be ready and desirous to be confirmed:" the great reason whereof is, that she may be satisfied that those who promised by their sureties in baptism do renew and confirm the contract then made; and that they will evermore endeavour themselves faithfully to observe such things, as by their own confession they have assented unto. And still, to preserve the dignity of the holy sacrament, her ministers are obliged, according to the direction of the ancient canons, as well as our own, to admit "no notorious offenders, or declared schismatics," to the participation of it. That this method may be more effectual, and that no unqualified person may surreptitiously intrude, "strangers from other parishes are not to be received to the holy communion;" and as many as intend to be partakers of it, shall "signify their names to the

Rubric after confirmation.

Can. xxvii

Can. xxvii

curate at least some time the day before;" that notorious ill livers may be admonished of their faults; and that such as live in malice and hatred, and are at variance with one another, may be reconciled, and give proofs of their repentance, before they presume to come and offer their gifts. When warning is given for the celebration of the holy communion, the whole congregation is put in mind of their duty by a pathetical exhortation. And if any have such a sense of their sins that they cannot quiet their own consciences, they are advised to consult their spiritual guides, and to open their grief, that they may receive ghostly counsel and advice, with the benefit of absolution. And even in the beginning of the communion-service, the priest that officiates lays before the communicants the danger of unworthy receiving, and invites only such to approach as have the requisite qualifications. So that if pious education, if the solemn ratifying our baptismal vow, if conference with our spiritual guides, if a particular prohibition of notorious offenders, and the earnest exhortations of our pastors, can secure these holy mysteries from being abused, it must be owned our Church has taken sufficient care to prevent it. Let them only consider, who neglect the observance of such admirable rules, how they will be able to

Read the rubric before the communion.

answer it at the great day; and how far they are guilty of those profanations, which they might prevent by a due discharge of what the Church requires from them, and which they are under such strict obligations to observe: and how far they give occasion by their neglect to those schisms, which are made upon the pretence of the scandalous practices of that kind.

Upon this subject I cannot forbear recommending to the reverend clergy, with great submission, the advice of St. Chrysostom, which he gives in his 83d homily on the 26th chapter of St. Matthew's gospel; whose episcopal character, as well as the great opinion the Christian world had of his great parts and eminent piety, makes him very fit to be listened to in this particular; for he does not more earnestly press the duty, than he does plainly assert the authority of the sacerdotal power to effect it. "Let no Judas," saith he, "no lover of money, be present at this table. He that is not Christ's disciple, let him depart from it. Let no inhumane, no cruel person, no uncompassionate man, or who is impure, come hither. I speak this to you that administer, as well as to you who partake; for it is necessary I speak these things to you, that you may take great care, and use your utmost diligence to distribute

these offerings aright. For your punishment will be great, if knowingly you suffer any wicked person to partake of this table; for his blood shall be required at your hands. Wherefore, if any general, any provincial governor, or the emperor himself, be not worthy, repel him; for thou hast a greater power or authority than he."

I am sensible, it may be objected, that the same laws that oblige persons to receive the holy sacrament as a qualification for an office, do oblige the clergy to admit them. But then it must be considered, that the power which Christ has invested His Church with, of admitting persons into her communion and excluding them from it, no human laws can deprive her of; and therefore when the laws require men to receive this holy sacrament to qualify themselves for offices, they always suppose that they must first qualify themselves according to the holy laws of the Church, which are founded on those of the Gospel. So that it would be a great injury to our legislators to imagine, that if an unbaptised or excommunicate person, a deist, or a notorious sinner, should happen to obtain an office, that they intended to oblige the Church to admit persons under these bad dispositions to be partakers of the blessed eucharist.

Sixthly, I shall add some directions as to the manner of performing this duty of receiving

the holy sacrament, with suitable devotions on such occasions.

As to the *reverence* of our bodies; our outward behaviour ought to be governed by such measures as the Church directs. For this reason, as well as because it is the humblest posture, we must receive the holy sacrament upon our knees; which is most proper, when we are at the same time making our addresses to the great Majesty of heaven and earth. The ancient Christians, in the time of St. Cyril of Jerusalem, received the consecrated element of bread into the palm of their right hand, which being supported by their left was so carried to their mouths, that no portion of that divine nourishment could fall to the ground. I am not certain that the Church means this, when she orders her officers to deliver the sacrament *to the people into their hands:* but I think the expression sufficiently justifies it; and therefore every communicant may take the liberty of making use of it. And as we are to kneel or stand, as the Church directs, so, I think, it is fit we should not deviate from some devout customs that are established by ancient and general practice, which in time come to have the force of a law. It is by such rules that a beautiful uniformity is created in our deport-

Catec. mystag. v. § 21

Rubric after consecration

ment, as well as in our petitions. And all our different postures ought to be used with such gravity and seriousness as may demonstrate how intent we are when engaged in this Christian sacrifice; and yet without such affectations and particularities as are apt to disturb those that are near us, and give occasion to others to suspect us as acting a formal, hypocritical part. To this end, when we put our bodies into a praying posture, with which I think leaning and lolling seems very inconsistent, we should do well, when upon our knees, to fix our eyes downward, that we may not be diverted by any objects near us; at the same time resolving not to suffer them to gaze about, whereby they do but fetch in matter for wandering thoughts. A farther help to this attention is great silence; therefore we should never join aloud with the minister but where it is enjoined, endeavouring to make the rest our own by a hearty amen. The same care should be taken about those private prayers we make use of at the altar, which ought to be pronounced so softly, that they may not disturb the devotion of our fellow-Christians that are near us. We must particularly remember not to repeat after the minister what peculiarly relates to his office; which I mention the rather, because I have frequently observed some devout people following him that

officiates in the *exhortation* and *absolution*, as well as the *confession*, which, if thoroughly considered, must be judged a very absurd and improper expression of the people's devotion, because a distinguishing mark of the priest's office.

As to the reverence of our minds; it ought to consist in such intenseness and application of thought as may engage our hearts as well as our lips in this solemn service; in such fervency of affection, and in such a measure of importunity, as may shew how desirous we are of the mercy which we request, and how highly we value and esteem what we ask for. To this end we ought with great attention to accompany the *man of God* that administers throughout the whole office, which is admirably framed and composed to express all those pious dispositions and devout affections which well-prepared minds ought to exercise upon such occasions: our repentance, in the confession and absolution; our charity, in relieving our poor brethren by a liberal offering, in praying for all conditions of men, and in forgiving those that have offended us; our humility, in acknowledging our own unworthiness; our resolutions of better obedience, in presenting ourselves reasonable, holy, and lively sacrifices unto God; our praises and thanksgivings, in the hymns and

devotions after the holy communion. And when others are communicating, we may enlarge ourselves upon these subjects; always taking care that our private devotions give place to those that are public, and that we lay aside our own prayers when the minister calls upon us to join with him.

Devotions for the Altar.

When the sermon is ended, we should endeavour as soon as we can to compose ourselves for the devout celebration of the Christian sacrifice; and while the minister is preparing himself to attend the holy table, before the communion-office begins, that time may be well employed in imploring God's grace to assist us in the right discharge of that holy service we are about to perform.

A Prayer,

To prepare our minds for the devout Celebration of the Holy Mysteries.

Almighty God, by whose great bounty and infinite goodness I have now an opportunity offered me of approaching Thy altar, and of pleading before Thee the prevailing merits of the death and passion of Thy Son Jesus Christ;

I am sensible, O Lord, of my great unworthiness to partake of this Christian sacrifice; but the positive command of my blessed Saviour, when He was about to lay down His life for my sake, has made it absolutely necessary; and the many spiritual wants I labour under, oblige me to apply to this sovereign remedy to repair those breaches my sinful follies have made in my soul.

Assist me, therefore, O Lord, with Thy Holy Spirit in the duty and service I am about to perform; grant that nothing during all the time of this holy action, may make me forfeit that reverence and respect which I owe unto Thy divine Majesty, or that attention which becomes the celebration of these holy mysteries. Touch me with such an awe of Thy presence as may fix my wandering thoughts, compose my tumultuous affections, stir up my flat and cold desires, that I may feel the power and taste the sweetness of this divine banquet.

That I may have such a sense of my Saviour's sufferings, as may fill my soul with love and gratitude towards Him for those inestimable benefits He has purchased for me; that I may have such a sight of my sins which occasioned all His sorrows, as heartily to bewail and detest them; such a faith in that full, perfect oblation and satisfaction made upon the cross for the

sins of the whole world, that I may so importunately plead the merit of it in this commemoration of that sacrifice, as to render Thee gracious and propitious to me a miserable sinner; such a conviction of my own weakness and insufficiency, as may procure Thy gracious aid and assistance; such longing desires of being made conformable to Thy holy will and pleasure, as may transform me into Thy divine image, and fix me to continue Thy faithful servant all the remaining days of my life.

I profess, O Lord, a firm and vigorous resolution to resist all impertinent thoughts or wicked suggestions that may any ways oppose my holy purposes; I will never consent to them; my sincere design is to offer Thee a sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving; to love and adore Thee as the God of my life, as my portion, which I have chose in the land of the living, and which I humbly beg may be my happiness to all eternity, through the merits of Jesus Christ my Saviour. Amen.

The communion-service begins with some sentences collected out of the holy Scriptures proper for the occasion, which do with great energy enforce the duty of charity, which we are called upon to exercise at this time. The oblations of the primitive Christians were upon

such occasions offered in such great abundance, that their clergy were thereby liberally maintained, and all necessaries provided for divine administrations, as well as for the relief of the poor; but now that a stated maintenance is settled upon those that wait at the altar these collections are particularly applied to the support of the necessitous; not but that the distribution belongs to the minister, who may share in it himself, if his wants require it. The apostle advises, that these collections be made every Lord's day; and from his authority the Church invites us to give alms so often, whether there be a communion or no; but this apostolical custom of weekly collections is now generally omitted, and wholly laid aside. It would be well indeed, if a means could be found out to revive them, that such oblations might accompany all our solemn services upon the Lord's day.

1 Cor. xvi. 1, 2.

Till then we should be more liberal in the performance of our almsdeeds at the altar, to which the following sentences exhort us, both from command and example,—by shewing us how reasonable it is in itself, how acceptable to God, and how profitable to us, both in this life and the next; by representing to us the great sin, as well as danger, of omitting it. They farther instruct us in the objects that

are to be supported by our oblations, which are the clergy, and all the poor, especially Christians; in the measures of it, liberality and cheerfulness; and lay down the end we ought to propose to ourselves, which is the glory of God. All these sentences are read by the minister during the collection, with such a pause generally between each text, that the communicants have leisure to make a short meditation upon each of them, of which I shall give an example, for the assistance of those that want such helps.

1. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven. St. Matt. v. 16.

Grant, O God, that I may set that example of charity to my neighbour which Thou requirest; that it may redound to Thy honour and glory, from whom I receive the power to do any thing that is good; and that by such visible effects of Thy grace, my neighbour may be attracted to know and love Thee.

2. Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon the earth, where the moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither rust nor moth doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through and steal. St. Matt. vi. 19, 20.

I renounce, O Lord, all inordinate affections to the things of this world, which are fading in their nature, and liable to innumerable accidents. I will fix my mind upon the enjoyments of Thy kingdom, which are everlasting, and prepare myself for them by doing good to the souls and bodies of men.

3. Whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, even so do unto them: for this is the law and the prophets. St. Matt. vii.

Let this golden rule, O Lord, govern all my actions; let me relieve the necessities of my fellow-Christians, because I should expect support if I were in their circumstances. This is, moreover, the best expression of my love to Him, wherein Thou hast made so great a part of religion to consist.

4. Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. St. Matt. vii. 21

We are happy upon any terms, O blessed Jesus, to be admitted into Thy kingdom: the belief of Thy holy doctrine shall appear in my life and conversation; and I will use all the means of grace Thou hast established, in order to purify my corrupt nature, and

to enable me to do the will of Thy heavenly Father.

5. Zaccheus stood forth, and said unto the Lord, Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor; and if I have done any wrong to any man, I restore fourfold. St. Luke xix. 8.

I am resolved, O Lord, to perfect my repentance, by restoring to the right owner whatever I unjustly possess; by making satisfaction to those I have any ways wronged; and by shewing mercy to the poor, which will entitle me to Thy mercy, O Lord, when I stand most in need of it.

6. Who goeth a warfare at any time of his own cost? who planteth a vineyard, and eateth not of the fruit thereof? or who feedeth a flock, and eateth not of the milk of the flock? 1 Cor. ix. 7.

May Thy officers, O Lord, in their spiritual warfare, be alway supported! may the husbandmen of Thy vineyard be plentifully rewarded! and may the pastors of Thy flock receive abundant recompense for all their care and pains!

7. If we have sown unto you spiritual things, is it a great matter if we shall reap your worldly things? 1 Cor. ix. 11.

Grant that I may always reverence Thy

priests, because they have a peculiar relation to Thee; that I may sincerely love them, and cheerfully provide for their maintenance, because of those great benefits I receive from their administrations.

8. Do ye not know that they who minister about holy things live of the sacrifice? and they who wait at the altar are partakers with the altar? Even so hath the Lord also ordained, that they who preach the Gospel should live of the Gospel. 1 Cor. ix. 13, 14.

Under the legal dispensation Thou didst particularly, O Lord, provide for Thy holy ones; under the Gospel Thou hast declared Thy "labourers worthy of their hire." Let me religiously observe what Thou hast ordained, that I may never deprive them of their just rights by any sacrilegious encroachments, but be ready always to contribute to their comfortable subsistence.

9. He that soweth little shall reap little; and he that soweth plenteously shall reap plenteously. Let every man do according as he is disposed in his heart, not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver. 2 Cor. ix. 6, 7.

In my distributions to Thy ministers and to the poor members of Thy body, let, O Lord,

the willingness of my mind, and the largeness of the gift, recommend the offering; that I may never confine myself to the narrowest measures, but rather exercise self-denial in order to relieve them: for Thy bounty, which suffers not the least service to lose its reward, will more abundantly recompense our larger charities.

10. Let him that is taught in the word minister unto him that teacheth in all good things. Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he reap. Gal. vi. 6, 7

Thou hast, O Lord, rejoiced the heart of Thy servant with the knowledge of Thy heavenly truth: as I desire to render praise to Thy goodness for this great blessing, so I desire to be thankful to the instruments of this Thy favour, that their lives may be made easy and comfortable, whom Thou hast ordained for men in things pertaining to Thyself.

11. While we have time, let us do good unto all men, and especially unto them that are of the household of faith. Gal. vi. 10

Make me, O Lord, ready to embrace all occasions of doing good to all men, because they are Thy creatures; but let the members of the same body, all necessitous Christians particularly, share in my beneficence: for they are

the peculiar objects of Thy mercy and tenderness.

12. Godliness is great riches, if a man be content with that he hath; for we brought nothing into the world, neither may we carry any thing out. 1 Tim. vi. 6, 7.

Our happiness, O Lord, consists not in our abundance of riches, but in the discharge of a good conscience towards God and man, and in submission to Thy holy will. Let that be my care which will last for ever, and not the perishing things of this life, which death will certainly strip me of.

13. Charge them who are rich in this world, that they be ready to give, and glad to distribute; laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may attain eternal life. 2 Tim. vi. 17-19.

O my God, as I enjoy large effects of Thy bounty, so grant that I may rejoice the heart of my poor neighbours by a plentiful distribution: this will make my wealth a true blessing in this world, and through Thy infinite mercy secure the happiness of the next.

14. God is not unrighteous, that He will forget your works and labour that proceedeth of love,

which love ye have shewed for His Name's sake, who have ministered unto the saints, and yet do minister. Heb. vi. 10.

There is no merit in our best works, O Lord; but we hope for a reward from Thy goodness, which hath promised, and from Thy truth, which will perform it. Let but love animate our offerings, and we are assured Thou wilt cast a favourable eye towards them.

15. To do good and to distribute forget not: for with such sacrifices God is well pleased. Heb. xiii. 16.

Do I know sacrifices, O my God, that will please Thee, and shall I not offer them? O how happy dost Thou make Thy poor creatures in putting it into their power to do any thing that is acceptable to Thee! I will readily catch at every opportunity of doing good to the souls and bodies of men; for therein is Thy delight.

16. Whoso hath this world's goods, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him? 1 John iii. 17.

In vain I pretend to love Thee, O my God, if my necessitous brother finds not the effect of it. Thy providence has made him the object of my charity, and Thou hast thereby consulted

my greater good, in giving me thereby an occasion to testify the truth of my love towards Thee.

17. Give alms of thy goods, and never turn thy face from any poor man; and then the face of the Lord shall not be turned away from thee. Tobit iv. 7.

I am undone, O Lord, except Thou lookest upon me with an eye of mercy; therefore I will regard the cry of the poor, because the merciful shall obtain mercy.

18. Be merciful after thy power: if thou hast much, give plenteously; if thou hast little, do thy diligence gladly to give of that little: for so gatherest thou thyself a good reward in the day of necessity. Tob. iv. 8, 9.

It is fit, O Lord, that Thou, who givest me all, shouldst be acknowledged with a proportionable share; and yet so great is Thy goodness, that Thou rewardest the small returns we are able to make with comfort and support in the day of necessity, and in the hour of death.

19. He that hath pity on the poor lendeth unto the Lord; and, look, what he layeth out it shall be paid him again. Prov. xix. 17

What hast Thou not done, O Lord, to pro-

voke me to good works? Thou condescendest to be a debtor to Thine own creatures; and I should be justly counted worse than a brute, could I refuse to lend upon such advantageous terms.

20. Blessed is the man that provideth for the sick and needy: the Lord shall deliver him in the time of trouble. Ps. xli. 1.

It is Thy blessing, O Lord, alone, that can make us happy; let me never be so much wanting to myself, as to neglect those means Thou hast prescribed in order to attain it.

While the minister reads these exhortations to charity, the communicants make their offerings, which ought to be done with a short prayer for God's acceptance.

A Prayer

When we offer our Alms.

I ACKNOWLEDGE, O Lord, that all I possess is the effect of Thy bounty: it is from Thee I have received it, and to Thy holy name be the glory. Accept of this free-will offering from my hands, as a testimony of Thy right to all I enjoy, and as an exercise of that love and charity to my

necessitous brethren which Thou requirest, and art pleased to take as done to Thyself. O my God, I am resolved to prefer my duty before any temporal satisfaction, because Thy favour is better than life. I will dedicate a part of those good things Thou hast bestowed upon me to relieve the poor, because Thou hast made it an evidence of my love to Thee. And grant that all my almsdeeds may be performed with such purity and intention of mind, and with such a proportion to what Thou hast given me, that they may be acceptable in Thy sight, through the merits of Jesus Christ my Lord and Saviour. Amen.

When the offertory is finished, the priest desires God to accept of our alms, and of those oblations of bread and wine which he is now about to consecrate, whereby they may become to us the body and blood of Christ; in which we are to join with the greater fervour, because we are so particularly concerned in the acceptance of the holy gifts. And at this time it is that we exercise another sort of charity, by offering up our intercessions for the Church militant, for all estates and conditions of men, that God would be pleased to hear us for them, by virtue of the sacrifice of His Son, which we are about to commemorate. And we now thank God

for all His servants departed this life in His faith and fear, because it is by virtue of the same sacrifice they will obtain their perfect consummation and bliss. How conformable this is to the practice of the ancient Church, is well known to those who are skilled in ecclesiastical history.

Let us pray for the whole state of Christ's Church militant here on earth.

Almighty and ever-living God, who by Thy holy apostle hast taught us to make prayers and supplications, and to give thanks for all men; we humbly beseech Thee most mercifully [*to accept our alms and oblations, and*] to receive these our prayers, which we offer unto Thy divine Majesty, beseeching Thee to inspire continually the universal Church with the spirit of truth, unity, and concord. And grant that all they that do confess Thy holy Name may agree in the truth of Thy holy word, and live in unity and godly love. We beseech Thee also to save and defend all Christian kings, princes, and governors; and specially thy servant Victoria our Queen; that under her we may be godly and quietly governed; and grant unto her whole council, and to all that are put in authority under her, that they may

If there be no alms or oblations, then shall the words "of accepting our alms and oblations" be left out unsaid

truly and indifferently minister justice, to the punishment of wickedness and vice, and to the maintenance of Thy true religion and virtue. Give grace, O heavenly Father, to all bishops and curates, that they may, both by their life and doctrine, set forth Thy true and lively word, and rightly and duly administer Thy holy sacraments. And to all Thy people give Thy heavenly grace; and especially to this congregation here present, that with meek heart and due reverence they may hear and receive Thy holy word, truly serving Thee in holiness and righteousness all the days of their life. And we most humbly beseech Thee, of Thy goodness, O Lord, to comfort and succour all them, who in this transitory life are in trouble, sorrow, need, sickness, or any other adversity. And we also bless Thy holy Name, for all Thy servants departed this life in Thy faith and fear; beseeching Thee to give us grace so to follow their good examples, that with them we may be partakers of Thy heavenly kingdom. Grant this, O Father, for Jesus Christ's sake, our only Mediator and Advocate. Amen.

While the priest says the *Exhortation* and the *Invitation*, we should stand with great reverence, and attend to those advantages which he declares to be the portion of worthy com-

municants, and comfort ourselves with our pious resolutions against the dangers those incur that receive unworthily; and at the same time look inward upon ourselves, to see how far we come up to the qualifications of those that are invited to draw nigh, and to receive with comfort.

At the time of the celebration of the Communion, the Communicants being conveniently placed for the receiving of the Holy Sacrament, the Priest shall say this Exhortation:

Dearly beloved in the Lord, ye that mind to come to the holy communion of the body and blood of our Saviour Christ, must consider how St. Paul exhorteth all persons diligently to try and examine themselves, before they presume to eat of that bread and drink of that cup. For as the benefit is great, if with a true penitent heart and lively faith we receive that holy sacrament—(for then we spiritually eat the flesh of Christ, and drink His blood; then we dwell in Christ, and Christ in us; we are one with Christ, and Christ with us)—so is the danger great, if we receive the same unworthily. For then we are guilty of the body and blood of Christ our Saviour; we eat and drink our own damnation, not considering the Lord's body; we kindle God's wrath against us, we provoke Him to plague us with divers diseases, and sundry kinds

of death. Judge therefore yourselves, brethren, that ye be not judged of the Lord; repent you truly for your sins past; have a lively and stedfast faith in Christ our Saviour; amend your lives, and be in perfect charity with all men;—so shall ye be meet partakers of those holy mysteries. And, above all things, ye must give most humble and hearty thanks to God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, for the redemption of the world by the death and passion of our Saviour Christ, both God and man, who did humble Himself, even to the death upon the cross, for us miserable sinners; who lay in darkness and the shadow of death, that He might make us the children of God, and exalt us to everlasting life. And to the end that we should always remember the exceeding great love of our Master and only Saviour Jesus Christ thus dying for us, and the innumerable benefits which by His precious blood-shedding He hath obtained to us, He hath instituted and ordained holy mysteries as pledges of His love, and for a continual remembrance of His death, to our great and endless comfort. To Him, therefore, with the Father, and the Holy Ghost, let us give (as we are most bounden) continual thanks, submitting ourselves wholly to His holy will and pleasure, and studying to serve Him in true holiness and righteousness all the days of our life. Amen.

Then shall the Priest say to them that come to receive the Holy Communion:

Ye that do truly and earnestly repent you of your sins, and are in love and charity with your neighbours, and intend to lead a new life, following the commandments of God, and walking from henceforth in His holy ways; draw near with faith, and take this holy sacrament to your comfort; and make your humble confession to Almighty God, meekly kneeling upon your knees.

We must make our *Confession*, which follows next, in the humblest posture of kneeling, repeating the words after the minister with great sorrow of heart for the many heinous offences we have been guilty of; and must be sure that the inward sense of our minds answer the propriety of those expressions which the Church puts into our mouths, that while we draw near unto God with our lips, our hearts may not be far from Him.

Then shall this general Confession be made, in the name of all those that are minded to receive the Holy Communion, by one of the Ministers, both he and all the people kneeling humbly upon their knees, and saying:

Almighty God, Father of our Lord Jesus

Christ, Maker of all things, Judge of all men, we acknowledge and bewail our manifold sins and wickedness, which we from time to time most grievously have committed, by thought, word, and deed, against Thy divine Majesty, provoking most justly Thy wrath and indignation against us. We do earnestly repent, and are heartily sorry for these our misdoings; the remembrance of them is grievous unto us, the burden of them is intolerable. Have mercy upon us, have mercy upon us, most merciful Father; for Thy Son our Lord Jesus Christ's sake, forgive us all that is past, and grant that we may ever hereafter serve and please Thee in newness of life, to the honour and glory of Thy Name, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

When the *Absolution* is pronounced, we must keep ourselves in great silence, and in an humble posture, while we are receiving so great a blessing; for here we must not repeat the words after the minister, because it is a peculiar part of the priestly office to absolve. It is in some places the custom to pronounce an "amen," in a low tone, after every sentence of the absolution: however, we must be sure, at the end of it, to offer up an hearty "amen," that God would be pleased to confirm in heaven what He has given His ministers authority to pronounce on earth.

Then shall the Priest (or the Bishop, being present) stand up, and, turning himself to the people, pronounce this Absolution:

Almighty God our heavenly Father, who of His great mercy hath promised forgiveness of sins to all them that with hearty repentance and true faith turn unto Him, have mercy upon you, pardon and deliver you from all your sins, confirm and strengthen you in all goodness, and bring you to everlasting life, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

After the absolution, the Church has provided us with some choice portions of Scripture, to beget in us a lively faith and firm persuasion of God's mercy and forgiveness towards penitent sinners, to the end that their hopes may be revived, and that the comfort of the absolution may be confirmed to them.

They are generally read with so great a pause between them, that the communicants may have leisure to make some short reflections upon them, which may be done in the following manner:—

Come unto me, all that travail and are heavy laden, and I will refresh you. St. Matt. xi. 28.

In obedience to Thy call, O blessed Jesus,

I approach unto Thee. I must confess the sense of my many and great follies oppress me, and cover me with confusion; but Thy pardon and forgiveness will restore joy and gladness to my soul.

So God loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, to the end that all that believe in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life. St. John iii. 16.

No greater evidence of Thy love, O Lord, can be desired than the sacrifice of Thy Son. O qualify my soul to receive the benefit of it by a firm and immovable faith in the merits of His death, that I may escape those punishments my sins deserve, and obtain that salvation Thou hast graciously promised!

This is a true saying, and worthy of all men to be received, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners. 1 Tim. i. 15.

A most blessed and joyful truth, which I will firmly believe, because revealed from above. Thou, O blessed Jesus, wert made manifest to destroy the works of the devil, and to release me from the punishment due to my sins; let my true repentance make me a fit object of Thy mercy, and then even my sins shall not deprive me of the hopes of Thy favour.

If any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: and He is the propitiation for our sins. 1 St. John ii. 1

Blessed God! who hast not left us without remedy when our spiritual enemies prevail against us; I will not despair of Thy mercy, since the immaculate Jesus intercedes for me. Let the merit of His sufferings plead for the acceptance of my penitential sorrow, and convey to me strength and power to serve Thee better for the time to come.

We have been hitherto employed in hearing our duty, exercising our charity, professing our repentance, and strengthening our faith in the goodness of God. We are now called upon to praise Him, and to "lift up our hearts to Him:" which made so constant a part of this solemn service, that all the ancient liturgies agree in this form, which our Church retains. And, indeed, when our consciences are eased by repentance, and quieted by pardon, we have great reason joyfully to acknowledge the bounty of our Benefactor. And this exhortation hath not only a respect to the duty of praise, but seems to require the dismissing of all worldly thoughts, that we may the better fix our minds upon the holy mysteries. It is the Christians' *hoc age*, that calls them to attend with great seriousness and devo-

tion upon the solemn service they are engaged in; and therefore we must take care, when we declare with our lips that we "lift up our hearts to the Lord," that we be sincere in our profession.

After which the Priest shall proceed, saying.

Lift up your hearts.

Ans. We lift them up unto the Lord.

Priest. Let us give thanks unto our Lord God.

Ans. It is meet and right so to do.

Then shall the Priest turn to the Lord's Table, and say,

It is very meet, right, and our bounden duty, that we should at all times, and in all places, give thanks unto Thee, O Lord, *holy Father, Almighty, everlasting God.

* These words "holy Father" must be omitted on Trinity Sunday.

Here shall follow the proper Preface according to the time, if there be any specially appointed; or else immediately shall follow.

Therefore with angels and archangels, and with all the company of heaven, we laud and magnify Thy glorious Name, evermore praising Thee, and saying, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of Hosts, heaven and earth are full of Thy glory. Glory be to Thee, O Lord most high. Amen.

Proper Prefaces.

Upon Christmas-day, and seven days after:

Because Thou didst give Jesus Christ, Thine only Son, to be born as at this time for us, who, by the operation of the Holy Ghost, was made very man of the substance of the Virgin Mary His mother, and that without spot of sin, to make us clean from all sin; therefore with angels, &c.

Upon Easter-day, and seven days after:

But chiefly are we bound to praise Thee for the glorious resurrection of Thy Son Jesus Christ our Lord; for He is the very paschal Lamb, which was offered for us, and hath taken away the sin of the world; who by His death hath destroyed death, and by His rising to life again hath restored to us everlasting life. Therefore with angels, &c.

Upon Ascension-day, and seven days after:

Through Thy most dearly beloved Son Jesus Christ our Lord, who after His most glorious resurrection manifestly appeared to all His apostles, and in their sight ascended up into heaven to prepare a place for us; that where He is, thither we might also ascend, and reign with Him in glory. Therefore with angels, &c.

Upon Whitsunday, and six days after:

Through Jesus Christ our Lord, according to whose most true promise the Holy Ghost came down as at this time from heaven with a sudden great sound, as it had been a mighty wind, in the likeness of fiery tongues, lighting upon the apostles, to teach them, and to lead them to all truth; giving them both the gift of divers languages, and also boldness with fervent zeal constantly to preach the Gospel unto all nations, whereby we have been brought out of darkness and error into the clear light and true knowledge of Thee, and of Thy Son Jesus Christ. Therefore with angels, &c.

Upon the Feast of Trinity only:

Who art one God, one Lord; not one only Person, but three Persons in one substance: for that which we believe of the glory of the Father, the same we believe of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, without any difference or inequality. Therefore with angels, &c.

After each of which Prefaces shall immediately be sung or said,

Therefore with angels and archangels, and with all the company of heaven, we laud and magnify Thy glorious Name, evermore praising

Thee, and saying, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of Hosts, heaven and earth are full of Thy glory. Glory be to Thee, O Lord most high. Amen.

Then follows the address, which consists in an acknowledgment of our own unworthiness to approach God's table, and in imploring His divine assistance.

Then shall the Priest, kneeling down at the Lord's Table, say, in the name of all them that shall receive the Communion, this Prayer following:

We do not presume to come to this Thy table, O merciful Lord, trusting in our own righteousness, but in Thy manifold and great mercies: we are not worthy so much as to gather up the crumbs under Thy table. But Thou art the same Lord, whose property is always to have mercy; grant us, therefore, gracious Lord, so to eat the flesh of Thy dear Son Jesus Christ, and to drink His blood, that our sinful bodies may be made clean by His body, and our souls washed through His most precious blood, and that we may evermore dwell in Him, and He in us. Amen.

After this comes the prayer of *Consecration*, the most ancient and essential part of this eucharistical worship, because it is by the prayer and

authority of God's lawful minister that the offerings of bread and wine become to us symbols of the body and blood of Christ. We ought now with great devotion to join in those petitions the priest offers up, to the end that the elements of bread and wine may be invigorated with the divine virtue of Christ's body and blood. We should attend to the actions of breaking the bread and pouring out the wine, with proper meditations.

When the Priest, standing before the Table, hath so ordered the Bread and Wine, that he may with the more readiness and decency break the Bread before the People, and take the Cup into his hands, he shall say the Prayer of Consecration as followeth:

Almighty God our heavenly Father, who of Thy tender mercy didst give Thine only Son Jesus Christ to suffer death upon the cross for our redemption; who made there (by His one oblation of Himself once offered) a full, perfect, and sufficient sacrifice, oblation, and satisfaction for the sins of the whole world; and did institute, and in His holy Gospel command us to continue, a perpetual memory of that His precious death until His coming again; hear us, O merciful Father, we most humbly beseech Thee, and grant that we, receiving these Thy

creatures of bread and wine, according to Thy Son our Saviour Jesus Christ's holy institution, in remembrance of His death and passion, may be partakers of His most blessed body and blood: who in the same night that He was betrayed [a] took bread; and when He had given thanks, [b] He brake it, and gave it to His disciples, saying, Take, eat; [c] this is my body which is given for you, do this in remembrance of me. Likewise after supper He [d] took the cup, and when He had given thanks He gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of this; for [e] this is my blood of the New Testament, which is shed for you, and for many, for the remission of sins. Do this, as oft as ye shall drink it, in remembrance of me. Amen.

[a] Here the priest is to take the paten into his hands.

[b] And here to break the bread.

[c] And here to lay his hand upon all the bread.

[d] Here he is to take the cup into his hand

[e] And here to lay his hand upon every vessel (be it chalice or flagon) in which there is any wine to be consecrated.

When the consecration is finished, it will be very fit to express our admiration and thankfulness for the divine nourishment provided for us.

A Prayer

Immediately after Consecration.

ACCEPT, O eternal God, of that representation we make before Thee of that all-sufficient sacrifice which Thy Son our Saviour Jesus Christ made upon the cross: let the merit of it plead effectually for the pardon and forgiveness of all my sins, and render Thee favourable and propitious to me, a miserable sinner; let the power of it prevail against all the powers of darkness; let the wisdom of it make me wise unto salvation; and let the peace of it reconcile me to Thee, and bring to me peace of conscience.

I adore Thee, O blessed Jesus, my Redeemer, who didst endure the painful and shameful death of the cross, to recover me from a state of sin and misery; I admire Thine infinite condescension, who wert pleased to be made miserable, that I might be made happy; poor, that I might be enriched; and didst die, that I might live for ever. With all my soul, O dear Jesus, I love and praise Thee for these stupendous expressions of Thy bounty and goodness towards me. O Lamb of God, that takest away the sins of the world, have mercy upon me; O Lamb of God, that takest away the sins of the world, grant me Thy peace. Amen, Lord Jesus, Amen.

A Prayer

Before receiving the Consecrated Bread, consisting of Confession, and imploring Pardon.

I. ALMIGHTY and everlasting God, I desire to humble myself before Thee, under the sense of those many and heinous sins which I have been guilty of against Thy Divine Majesty in thought, word, and deed.

I confess with sorrow and confusion of face, that I have too often neglected the duties of religion, which is the great and important concern of my life; and when I have performed them, I have not exercised that fervour of spirit, that intenseness of mind, which such holy services require from me.

I have not been sufficiently thankful for the continued effects of Thy goodness and bounty towards me; neither have I received the afflicting dispensations of Thy providence with that patience and submission which is due to that infinite wisdom from whence they proceed.

I have not preserved such a sense of my follies and infirmities as ought to have inspired a mean and low opinion of myself, and to have made me ready to condescend to the lowest offices for the service of my fellow-Christians.

I have not set a sufficient guard upon my

senses, so that my eyes and ears have been instrumental in defiling and polluting my soul; and even the comforts and conveniences of life have been made a snare, by indulging pleasure more than that end and design for which they were bestowed.

I have had a greater regard to the fashion and custom of the world, than to that sincerity which Thou requirest in all my conversation.

I have too often impaired the credit and reputation of my neighbour by discovering his faults and infirmities, and have too easily listened to those slanders against him which bad men have suggested.

I have not embraced all those occasions Thou hast offered me of doing good to the souls and bodies of my fellow-Christians; neither have I discharged with due care those relative offices in the station wherein Thy providence has placed me.

II. I am astonished, O Lord, at my foolish rashness, when I reflect upon that dread Majesty which I have provoked:

I detest and abhor my ingratitude, when I consider the infinite kindness of that bountiful Father whom I have offended:

I condemn and accuse my unaccountable stupidity, when I recollect that miserable slavery

and bondage which I have preferred before the perfect freedom of Thy service.

I abhor myself in dust and ashes; and if Thou, O Lord, hadst dealt with me according to my deserving, instead of approaching Thy altar with hopes of acceptance, I might have been spending a sad eternity under remediless pains and misery.

But there is forgiveness with Thee, that Thou mayest be feared; and Thou hast declared Thy mercy to extend over all Thy works.

The inestimable sacrifice of Thy Son, which Thou hast provided for us, sufficiently assures me of Thy readiness to admit me to terms of peace and reconciliation.

O let Thy infinite mercy and compassion receive me in the quality of a penitent supplicant, whom Thy great patience has borne with as a sinner.

I am heartily sorry I have offended Thee; I detest my sins, because they are displeasing to Thee, who art infinite goodness.

I am resolved, by the assistance of Thy grace, to return no more to folly, to avoid all occasions of evil, and to live better for the time to come.

I entreat Thee, therefore, by the merit of Thy Son's blood, the price of my redemption,

that Thou wouldst be pleased to release me from the guilt of all my sins.

Let that immaculate and pure sacrifice which He offered upon the cross, and which by Thy good providence I now commemorate, be effectual for my pardon and forgiveness.

I know my many and great sins are just matter of fear and dejection of spirit; but I will hope in Thy mercies, which are boundless and infinite.

The sense of my own unworthiness would sink me into despair, did I not reflect upon Thine infinite goodness, and that precious blood which was shed to purchase redemption for me.

III. Thus supported, O Lord, I approach this Christian sacrifice.

I come as a sick man to the great Physician of life; I beseech Thee, O Lord, to cure my infirmities:

I come as a polluted wretch to the Fountain of mercy; wash away, I entreat Thee, all my uncleanness:

I come as a returning prodigal child to his tender and compassionate Father; oh, receive me, and relieve me, and revive me by Thy favour:

I come as a blind man to the Source of eternal brightness; do Thou, O Lord, enlighten my darkness, that I may behold the wondrous things of Thy law:

I come as a poor frail creature to the great Lord of heaven and earth; supply my wants, and do abundantly more for me than I am able to ask or think.

Let me not only receive the outward and visible signs, but the inward and spiritual grace, the body and blood of Thy Son Jesus Christ;

That so all carnal affections may die in me, and that all things belonging to the Spirit may live and grow in me;

That I may have power and strength to have victory, and to triumph against the world, the flesh, and the devil;

And also may be endued with all such heavenly virtues, which are pleasing to Thee, and which Thou wilt eternally reward for the merit of Thy Son's death, to whom with the Father and the Holy Ghost be all honour and glory, world without end. Amen.

Another Prayer

Before receiving the Consecrated Bread, consisting of Petitions for the Virtues of a Christian Life.

I. Most merciful and gracious God, who of Thy great goodness didst give Thy Son Jesus Christ to take upon Him our nature, and to

humble Himself to death, even the death of the cross;

I beseech Thee by His infinite condescension, by His perfect obedience, and by His meritorious sufferings, not only to pardon my past sins, but to endue me with power and strength to resist them for the time to come.

Let the virtue of these holy mysteries replenish me with such supernatural gifts and graces of Thy Holy Spirit as may enable me not only to act conformable to the light of my own mind, but may make me readily obey Thy heavenly motions, and constantly follow the suggestions of Thy holy inspiration.

Give me a zealous sense of piety towards Thee my gracious Lord and Sovereign, and to all Thy sacred and divine mysteries.

Let me reverence Thy word and worship, and all things and persons dedicated and devoted to Thy peculiar service.

Let me submit to all the afflictions Thou shalt think fit to lay upon me with patience and with meekness.

Let me trust to Thy providence to supply me under all dangers and necessities:

And let me thankfully acknowledge Thy bounty in all those good things which Thou so freely hast bestowed upon me.

II. Give me, O Lord, that divine wisdom

which proposes the pleasing Thee as the end and aim of all my actions, and which directs to all those means which Thou hast graciously established for the working out my salvation;

That my precious time may not be employed in hunting after trifles; that my natural talents may not be buried and drowned in brutish sensuality; that my study may not be vanity, nor my labour folly:

But that, framing a right judgment in all things, I may fix my mind upon those pleasures which are at Thy right hand, which are permanent and durable;

And that the great care and business of my life may be to obtain Thy favour, who art the sovereign good of my soul, and the satisfying centre of all my desires.

To this end inure me to spiritual objects by constant and fervent prayer, by entertaining my thoughts with pious meditations, by reading and hearing Thy holy word with reverence and attention, and by frequently approaching Thy altars with humility and devotion.

And above all, let a constant fear of offending my good God put me upon my guard, and make me watchful, amidst those imminent dangers that surround me in this my pilgrimage on earth.

Thou, O Lord, who resistest the proud, and

givest grace to the lowly, endue me with the virtue of true humility, the model of which Thy only Son traced out for the practice of the faithful;

That I may have a just sense of all my weaknesses and follies, and may readily submit to the meanest offices for the welfare and benefit of my fellow-Christians;

That I may restrain all immoderate desires of honour, by doing nothing through strife and vain-glory;

And that I may never exalt myself upon the account of any advantage I enjoy of body or mind above others, by remembering that it is not the effect of my merit, but of Thy infinite goodness and distinguishing mercy.

O deliver me from the slavery and dominion of pride, which threw angels from heaven, and drove man out of paradise; which produces so much evil and torment wherever it resides, and which, above all, is so hateful in Thy sight!

III. Grant, O Lord, that I may love Thee above all things, who art infinitely perfect in Thy own nature;

That I may desire Thee above all things, who art full of mercy and compassion towards the children of men.

Whom is there in heaven but Thee? and whom upon earth that I can desire in comparison

of Thee? As the hart thirsteth after the water-brooks, so let my soul long after Thee, O God.

Let the allurements of the world, and the enjoyments of sense, appear as trifling entertainments in comparison of the pleasure and happiness of serving Thee and doing good.

Let the difficulties and dangers which I meet with in the way of my duty be so far from discouraging me, that they may raise my spirits, increase my resolution, and serve only to make the pleasure of loving Thee more intense and perfect.

Let the divine flame of Thy love burn so bright in my soul, that it may free my mind from all vile affections, and influence all my actions with a careful observance of Thy holy laws, and farther evidence its sincerity by diligently consulting the temporal and spiritual happiness of my neighbour.

O let it suppress all the bitter effects of envy, that I may compassionate his misfortunes, and rejoice in all the good things Thou art pleased to bestow upon him;

That I may be tender of his reputation, and never expose it by rash censures, nor diminish it by the relation of his real infirmities;

That I may guard my heart from secretly repining at his prosperity, or triumphing in his calamity;

That I may set a watch upon the door of my lips, that I may speak no evil concerning him, nor utter any words of detraction;

That it may quiet and appease the furious boiling of anger in my mind, by making me patient and meek under all provocations, by disposing me to forgive offences, and to return silence to all injurious treatment;

That it may conquer worldly sorrow which worketh death, by a comfortable expectation of future happiness;

That it may expel malice by doing good; that it may strengthen my weakness by fortitude, cure my despair by hope, my listlessness by spiritual exercises;

And restrain the wanderings of my mind towards unlawful things, by being stedfast and unmovable in the work of the Lord.

IV. Give me, O Lord, a sober abstinence, that I may know how to abound, and how to want;

That my fleshly appetites may be kept under strict government, since the indulging of them by our first parents brought death into the world;

That they may always observe their due bounds, by administering to the necessities of life; and never support and encourage luxury, which is boundless and infinite, which brings

forth scurrility and immodesty, which depresses the soul, and renders it unapt for spiritual enjoyments.

Make me so mindful of that strict account I must give of all my actions at the dreadful tribunal-seat, that it may mortify all inclinations and temptations to sinful pleasures;

And stir me up to zeal and diligence in performing all those things which are acceptable in Thy sight.

In order to attain these blessed ends, O Lord, I approach to Thy holy table, that I may grow in grace, and may be enabled to imitate the suffering virtues of the crucified Jesus.

Grant, therefore, most merciful God, that the receiving the symbols of His body and blood, which I am about to partake of, may, by the grace and efficacy of His Spirit, conform me to His divine image, and make me stedfast in serving Thee, till Thou takest me finally to enjoy Thee, through Jesus Christ, my blessed Saviour and Redeemer. Amen.

The foregoing prayers may be used in our pews before we go up to the communion-table. When the communicants are but few, and we have not time to enlarge our devotions, we may comprehend the devout affections of a worthy receiver in the following shorter prayer:

A Prayer

Before receiving the Consecrated Elements.

Most gracious God, who of Thy infinite mercy hast given Thy Son Jesus Christ to be our great High-Priest, and the Bishop of our souls; who did offer up Himself to Thee a pure and immaculate sacrifice upon the cross for us miserable sinners; who has given us His flesh to eat, and His blood to drink, in a mystical manner; and hast assured us by Thy Holy Spirit, that as often as we eat that bread, and drink that cup, we shew forth the Lord's death till His coming again:

I humbly beseech Thee, therefore, by the merits of His blood, the great price of our redemption;

I entreat Thee by His wonderful and ineffable charity, wherewith He has vouchsafed to love us unworthy creatures at so great a rate, that Thou wouldst be pleased to wash me in His blood from all my sins, which make me unworthy to partake of these holy mysteries:

Let my repentance be hearty and sincere, and express itself in all the circumstances of holy obedience for the time to come.

Thou alone out of an unclean thing canst

bring a clean; of a wretched sinner make me therefore holy and righteous.

Thou art the Fountain of mercy, shut not up Thy bowels of compassion towards me.

Thou art the great Physician of souls, display Thy power in my health and recovery.

Let me approach Thy holy table with reverence and devotion, that no vile affections may hinder me from receiving the benefits of this divine nourishment.

Let me celebrate this Christian sacrifice with purity of heart, and a right intention of mind, that I may obtain all those advantages for which Thou wert graciously pleased to establish it.

Let me entirely resign my soul and body to be a reasonable, holy, and lively sacrifice unto Thee; for Thou hast the justest claim to me, since the blessed Jesus has purchased me at the price of His own blood.

Grant, O Lord, that I may constantly endeavour to make some proficiency in all the virtues of the Christian life, because the blessed Jesus has obtained for me, by the merits of His sufferings, the grace and assistance of Thy Holy Spirit, to work in me both to will and to do Thy good pleasure.

Make me ready to be reconciled to all those that have offended me, because when we were

enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son.

Let me embrace all my poor brethren with sincere love and charity, and contribute all I can to the relief of Christ's distressed members, because He thought not His life too dear, nor His blood too precious, to redeem me from a state of bondage and slavery.

Strengthen me, O Lord, in such a manner by this spiritual food, that I may successfully encounter all the attacks of my spiritual enemies.

Suppress in me the spirit of pride and vain-glory, of envy and detraction, of uncleanness and intemperance, or of any distrust and diffidence of Thy mercy.

May all temptations to these offences against Thy holy laws be overcome by that power which Thou shalt be pleased to communicate to me in this holy sacrament;

And may all those evils which the craft and subtilty of the devil or man worketh against me be brought to nought:

That, being outwardly and inwardly fortified by the assistance of Thy grace, I may press forward towards the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus; when I shall enjoy Thee no longer in mystery, which is our lot and portion here below, but see Thee

face to face, and be eternally satisfied with the pleasures of Thy kingdom, in and through the merits of Jesus Christ, our only Mediator and Advocate. Amen.

When the Priest approaches to deliver the consecrated Bread:

Come, O Lord, and make no long tarrying, O my God.

I am not worthy Thou shouldst enter under my roof; but, Lord, be merciful to me a sinner.

I long for Thy salvation; O satisfy me with Thy likeness!

I open my heart to Thee; O come unto me, and abide with me; and powerfully support me in all trials and temptations, when I most need Thy help. Amen.

Then shall the Minister first receive the Communion in both kinds himself, and then proceed to deliver the same to the Bishops, Priests, and Deacons, in like manner (if any be present); and after that to the People also in order, into their hands, all meekly kneeling. And when he delivereth the Bread to any one, he shall say:

The body of our Lord Jesus Christ, which was given for thee, preserve thy body and soul unto everlasting life. Take and eat this in re-

membrance that Christ died for thee; and feed on Him in thy heart by faith with thanksgiving.

A Prayer

After receiving the Consecrated Bread.

BLESSED be Thy holy Name, O Lord Jesus, for this Thy inestimable gift, for this comfort Thou hast left me in this vale of tears.

As long as I live will I praise Thee; as long as I have any being, I will most thankfully acknowledge this Thy bounty and goodness to the children of men.

Thou hast given me Thy precious body to be the food of my soul; behold, I offer to Thee my body and soul, make them fit for Thy service.

Let this divine food repair in me whatever has been decayed by the lusts of the flesh or the wiles of Satan;

That my understanding may be exercised in the knowledge of Thee, and the contemplation of Thy divine truths, which are alone able to make me wise unto salvation;

That my will may choose and desire Thee above all things, who art the chiefest good, the most desirable portion of immortal souls;

That my affections may be entirely fixed on

Thee, who art only amiable, and the centre of eternal satisfaction.

I will love Thee, O Lord, because Thou art infinitely good, and Thy mercy endureth for ever.

I will love Thee, O Lord, because Thou didst create me after Thy own image, capable of loving Thee, and enjoying Thee eternally.

I will love Thee, O Lord, because when I had lost and undone myself, Thou didst die to redeem me.

I will love Thee, O Lord, because Thou art only worthy of my love; Thou only canst fill and satisfy my soul.

Be Thou, therefore, my hope and confidence, and let all my trust be placed in Thee.

Be Thou my riches and delight; and let all my joy and contentment rest in Thee.

Be Thou my peace and refuge; and let my pleasure and safety depend on Thee.

Be Thou my portion and greatest treasure; and let my eternal happiness be fixed in the enjoyment of Thee. Amen, Lord Jesus, Amen.

When the Priest approaches to deliver the Consecrated Wine:

I will receive the cup of salvation, and call upon the Name of the Lord.

I will ratify my vows with this blood of the

new covenant, and engage myself, O God, to be eternally Thine.

Satisfy my thirsty soul with good things; and let this communion of the blood of Christ put more gladness into my heart, than wine and oil when they increase. Amen.

And the Minister that delivereth the Cup to any one shall say:

The blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, which was shed for thee, preserve thy body and soul unto everlasting life. Drink this in remembrance that Christ's blood was shed for thee, and be thankful.

When all have communicated, the Minister shall return to the Lord's Table, and reverently place upon it what remaineth of the consecrated elements, covering the same with a fair linen cloth.

A Prayer

After receiving the Consecrated Wine.

Blessing and honour, glory and power, be unto Him that sitteth on the throne, and unto the Lamb that was slain, for ever and ever.

I give Thee most humble and hearty thanks, O Lord, from the bottom of my soul, that Thou hast been pleased to admit me at this time to

the participation of these holy and desirable mysteries;

That Thou hast vouchsafed to feed me a sinner, Thy unworthy servant, with the spiritual nourishment of the body and blood of Thy Son Jesus Christ; and this not for any merits of my own, but for the sake of Thy infinite goodness and mercy.

Unworthy though I am, yet Thy bounty, O Lord, never fails; the love of my Saviour is not diminished; and the virtue of His propitiation is never exhausted.

Grant, therefore, I beseech Thee, that this holy sacrament may never turn to my judgment and condemnation;

But that it may be health and recovery under all my weaknesses and infirmities;

Safety and defence against all the attacks of my spiritual enemies;

Vigour and strength to all my holy purposes and resolutions;

Comfort and support under all the afflictions and calamities of life;

Assistance and direction under all difficulties and doubts;

Courage and constancy under all dangers and persecutions, especially in times of sickness, and at the hour of death.

Finally, let it procure for me pardon and

forgiveness in this life, mercy and favour at the day of judgment, and a never-fading crown of glory in Thy heavenly kingdom, where, with Thy Son Jesus Christ and the blessed Spirit, Thou livest and reignest, one God, world without end. Amen.

Having finished those devotions that relate to ourselves, this is a proper season to be mindful of the wants and necessities of our brethren; and we cannot better exercise our charity, than by recommending the whole state of mankind to the mercy and goodness of God, and by interceding with Him, by the virtue of this Christian sacrifice, for a supply of whatever they shall stand in need of. Such intercessions always made a part of the public liturgies of the ancient Church, as it is well known to those who are conversant in antiquity, and no part of the prayers exceeded more in length than that which related to this subject; so that we cannot do better than to follow the ancient model for our direction in this particular.

A Prayer

For the whole State of Mankind.

Accept, O Lord, of my prayers and intercessions as a testimony of my charity for the whole race of mankind; and let the virtue and efficacy of this Christian sacrifice procure for them comfort and relief in all those wants and necessities they labour under.

Enlighten the dark corners of the earth with the bright sunshine of Thy glorious Gospel; and succeed the pious designs of all those that endeavour the propagation of the kingdom of Thy Son; that Thy way may be known upon earth, and Thy saving health among all nations.

Let Thy continual pity cleanse and defend Thy Church; and forasmuch as it cannot continue in safety without Thy succour, preserve it evermore by Thy help and goodness.

Endue the governors and pastors of it with courage and resolution to preserve those sacred rights Thou hast committed to their trust, with zeal and diligence in promoting solid and substantial piety, and with a conscientious discharge of all the important duties of their holy function.

Let all secular magistrates study to govern

their people with truth and justice, and to preserve them in wealth, peace, and godliness.

Bless our sovereign and all the royal family with the dew of Thy heavenly Spirit; that they, ever trusting in Thy goodness, protected by Thy power, and crowned with Thy gracious and endless favour, may continue before Thee in health, peace, joy, and honour, a long and happy life upon earth, and after death obtain everlasting life and glory in the kingdom of heaven.

Let war and bloodshed cease among Christian princes; and give to all nations unity, peace, and concord.

Bless all the people of this land with health, peace, and plenty; and teach them to use such Thy blessings with sobriety, gratitude, and charity.

Make all Christians sincerely to practise that religion they profess; and inspire them with such uniting principles and charitable hearts, that they may love one another, and thereby convince the world that they are Thy disciples.

Be merciful to all my friends, relations, and acquaintance; those that are in sin, convert them; those that are in grace, confirm and strengthen them; those that are in adversity, comfort and support them; and those that are in prosperity, suffer them not to forget Thee.

Forgive all my enemies; make them easy and ready to be reconciled; and give them repentance and better minds.

Be gracious to all that are in affliction and distress; that labour under the straits of poverty; that suffer persecution for the testimony of a good conscience; that mourn under captivity or banishment, or any unjust oppression;

That are exercised with bodily pains and diseases; that are solicited with strong temptations, or are dejected with terrors and troubles of mind.

Pity and relieve their several necessities; give them patience under all their sufferings; and in Thy due time deliver them according to Thy great mercy.

Assist those that are at the point of death; and when their strength fails, let not their faith fail; even in death, enable them to trust in Thee.

Shed Thy particular grace and benediction upon all those who are partakers of the holy communion this day;

That they may persevere in all their holy purposes and resolutions, and may conform themselves to the model of their crucified Saviour;

That the pattern of His piety and devotion, of His humility and charity, of His meekness

and patient suffering, may be so lively imprinted upon our minds, that we may transcribe His example in our lives and conversations:

That thus commemorating His all-sufficient sacrifice upon earth, we may receive the everlasting benefit of it in Thy heavenly kingdom, and bless and praise Thee for it to all eternity. Amen.

We cannot better conclude our devotions, if time and opportunity will permit, than by offering up our praises and thanksgivings for all those mercies and blessings God hath bestowed upon us all along in life, particularly for His inestimable love in the redemption of the world by our Lord Jesus Christ; and what heart that is warm with a true sense of what his Saviour has done and suffered for him, can refuse the humble tribute of a most grateful acknowledgment!

A Thanksgiving

For God's Mercies Temporal and Spiritual.

PRAISE the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me praise His holy Name. Praise the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all His benefits.

Thou, O Lord, art alone infinite in all excellences and perfections, and therefore Thou only

art the eternal Object of the adorations and praises of all Thy creatures.

I desire to praise and worship Thee with all the heavenly host, saying, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of heaven and earth, Thou hast created all things, and for Thy pleasure they are and were created.

All praise and thanksgiving be rendered unto Thee for making me after Thy own image and likeness, capable of loving Thee, and enjoying Thee eternally.

I bless Thee for the light of my reason, and all other endowments and faculties of my soul and body.

I bless Thee for preserving me from innumerable accidents and dangers through the whole course of my life; for all my known and unobserved deliverances; and for the guard Thy holy angels have kept over me.

I bless Thee for the advantages of a pious education, and for seasoning my tender mind with early notices of virtue and religion.

I bless Thee for recovering me to a sense of my duty, when I foolishly strayed from the fountain of all happiness; and for Thy unwearied patience towards me, after so many and so great provocations.

I bless Thee for all the comforts and accommodations of life which Thou hast bestowed

upon me, whereby my pilgrimage in this world has been softened and supported;

And I adore Thy wise providence in all those afflictions and disappointments with which Thou hast thought fit to exercise me, and which have brought me to that sense of Thee, and of myself, which it is likely nothing else would have done.

By Thee I have been holden up from the womb; my praise shall continually be of Thee.

Above all, I praise and magnify Thy holy Name for Thy inexpressible love to lost man:

For sending Thy Son into the world to redeem us from a state of sin and misery, by suffering for us, and dying in our stead, that we might be partakers of the divine nature, and receive the promises of eternal life;

And for His instituting and ordaining holy mysteries as pledges of His love, and for a continual remembrance of His death, to our great and endless comfort.

As long as I live will I praise Thee for these wonders Thou hast done for the children of men; as long as I have any being I will shew forth Thy noble acts.

I bless Thee for the advantages of Thy divine revelations, that Thou hast not abandoned me to the dim light of my own reason, but hast given me Thy holy Scriptures to instruct me in

what is necessary for me to believe and practise, in order to my eternal salvation.

I praise Thee for delivering me from temptations too strong for me, and for supporting me under many;

For the assistance, and direction, and comfort of Thy Holy Spirit; for Thy preventing and restraining grace;

For subduing my understanding and affections to the obedience of faith and godliness;

For inspiring me with good thoughts, and kindling pious desires in my soul; and for assisting me in all the methods of procuring eternal happiness;

For these and all other Thy mercies and favours, which are more than can be numbered, blessing and honour, thanksgiving and praise, be given unto Thee, O most adorable Deity, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, by me and by all angels, by all men and by all creatures, for ever and ever. Amen.

When all have communicated, and the priest returns to the remaining part of the communion-office, we must be sure to accompany him with our devoutest affections, and repeat after him all the petitions of that perfect form of prayer our Saviour has left us to help our infirmities, which is most properly used in this place;

that His comprehensive words may prevail for our acceptance, provided they are attended with the sincere and earnest desires of our hearts.

Then shall the Priest say the Lord's Prayer, the People repeating after him every Petition.

Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be Thy Name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: for Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen.

The prayer and praise that follow do with great propriety conclude this holy action in imitation of our Saviour's pattern, who concluded this His holy institution both with a prayer and a hymn; and therefore ought to be offered with particular intenseness and application of thought, that we may make some amends for any distractions or wanderings that may have overtaken us in the former part of the service.

John xvii. Matt. xxvi. 30.

After shall be said as followeth

O Lord and heavenly Father, we Thy humble servants entirely desire Thy fatherly goodness mercifully to accept this our sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving; most humbly beseeching Thee to grant that by the merits and death of Thy Son Jesus Christ, and through faith in His blood, we and all Thy whole Church may obtain remission of our sins, and all other benefits of His passion. And here we offer and present unto Thee, O Lord, ourselves, our souls and bodies, to be a reasonable, holy, and lively sacrifice unto Thee; humbly beseeching Thee that all we, who are partakers of this holy communion, may be fulfilled with Thy grace and heavenly benediction. And although we be unworthy, through our manifold sins, to offer unto Thee any sacrifice, yet we beseech Thee to accept this our bounden duty and service, not weighing our merits, but pardoning our offences, through Jesus Christ our Lord; by whom, and with whom, in the unity of the Holy Ghost, all honour and glory be unto Thee, O Father Almighty, world without end. Amen.

Or this

Almighty and everliving God, we most heartily thank Thee, for that Thou dost vouch-

safe to feed us, who have duly received these holy mysteries, with the spiritual food of the most precious body and blood of Thy Son our Saviour Jesus Christ; and dost assure us thereby of Thy favour and goodness towards us; and that we are very members incorporate in the mystical body of Thy Son, which is the blessed company of all faithful people; and are also heirs through hope of Thy everlasting kingdom, by the merits of the most precious death and passion of Thy dear Son. And we most humbly beseech Thee, O heavenly Father, so to assist us with Thy grace, that we may continue in that holy fellowship, and do all such good works as Thou hast prepared for us to walk in; through Jesus Christ our Lord, to whom, with Thee, and the Holy Ghost, be all honour and glory, world without end. Amen.

Then shall be said or sung:

Glory be to God on high, and in earth peace, good-will towards men. We praise Thee; we bless Thee; we worship Thee; we glorify Thee; we give thanks to Thee for Thy great glory, O Lord God, heavenly King, God the Father Almighty.

O Lord, the only begotten Son Jesu Christ; O Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father, that takest away the sins of the world, have

mercy upon us. Thou that takest away the sins of the world, have mercy upon us. Thou that takest away the sins of the world, receive our prayer. Thou that sittest at the right hand of God the Father, have mercy upon us.

For Thou only art holy; Thou only art the Lord; Thou only, O Christ, with the Holy Ghost, art most high in the glory of God the Father. Amen.

The blessing that only remains, which is pronounced by the bishop, if present, as the priest of greatest dignity, must be received in an humble posture, and with silent devotion, begging of God that it may be effectual for our future conduct in all the circumstances of holy obedience.

Then the Priest (or Bishop, if he be present) shall let them depart with this Blessing:

The peace of God, which passeth all understanding, keep your hearts and minds in the knowledge and love of God, and of His Son Jesus Christ our Lord: and the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, be amongst you, and remain with you always. Amen.

A short Prayer

When the Communion-Service is ended.

PARDON, O God, all those imperfections that have accompanied me at this time in my attendance at Thy altar; forgive the deadness and dulness of my affections, the wanderings of my thoughts, and the distractions of mind.

Let the sincerity of my holy purposes and resolutions make some amends for my weakness and frailty.

O let this commemoration of my crucified Saviour influence all my thoughts, words, and actions, that my conversation may be as becometh the Gospel of Christ!

Reward me not according to my deserts, but according to my great necessities, and Thy own rich mercy in Jesus Christ; to whom, with Thee, O God the Father, and God the Holy Ghost, be all honour and glory, world without end. Amen.

Where communions are large, we may want some exercises for the employing our devout affections; and the *Office for the Administration of the Holy Communion* contains such a variety of excellent matter for meditation, that it may not be improper to entertain our minds, while

others are receiving, with the consideration of some particular parts of it. This may possibly be sometimes more useful than either these or any other prayers, more especially to such as complain of coldness and dulness in their devotions; for meditation naturally tends to warm our affections, and raise in our minds a spirit of devotion.

For example; suppose I had determined to meditate on some part or parts of the confession, which begins thus, "Almighty God, Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Maker of all things, Judge of all men." Here I would stop, and consider well the import of these words; they contain four of God's most comprehensive titles. First, He is here said to be "Almighty;" secondly, "the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ;" thirdly, "the Maker and Creator of all things;" fourthly, "the Judge of all men." The consideration of the first and last will provoke us to godly sorrow; and the second and third will excite our hope in His mercy. So that from hence we may take occasion to exercise acts of sorrow and humiliation, of hope and love, &c., thus: "I consider, O my God, that I have offended Thee, who art Almighty, and therefore able to punish; but I consider too that Thou art the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, and therefore I cannot doubt of Thy love to me,

and of Thy readiness to forgive me, who repent and turn to Thee." Such ejaculations might be formed from each of these particulars, or from any other branches of the communion-office; but because all people are not able to form such acts, I have taken the liberty of adding several acts of the most considerable virtues of a Christian life: for no moments of this holy season should be lost; all these precious minutes should be husbanded to the greatest advantage; for they will have a mighty influence upon our whole lives; and by being frequently repeated they will stock our minds with variety of good thoughts, which may prove admirable helps all the remaining part of our days. If we have not time for this spiritual improvement in the Church, it will be very proper to make use of them in our closets; for days set apart for the public worship of God should have a larger share of our private devotions, and then the sense of religion will stick closer to our minds when we mix again with the world, and return to our secular employments.

Acts of Faith.

I BELIEVE, O God, that Thou art an eternal incomprehensible Spirit, infinite in all perfections, who didst make all things out of nothing,

and dost govern them all by Thy wise providence.

Let me always adore Thee with profound humility as my Sovereign Lord; and help me to love and praise Thee with godlike affections and suitable devotion.

I believe, O God, that in the unity of Thy Godhead there is a trinity of Persons; that Thou art perfectly One, and perfectly Three; one essence, and three Persons. The depth of this mystery I cannot comprehend; but I firmly believe it, because Thou hast revealed it in Thy holy word, who art infinite truth; and I will praise and adore the holy Trinity, to whose service I was religiously dedicated in baptism, as the joint Authors of my salvation.

I believe, O blessed Jesus, that Thou art of one substance with the Father, the very and eternal God; that Thou didst take upon Thee our frail nature; that Thou didst truly suffer, and wert crucified, dead, and buried, to reconcile us to Thy Father, and to be a sacrifice for sin.

I believe, O Almighty Love, that according to the types and prophecies which went before of Thee, and according to Thy own infallible prediction, Thou didst by Thy own power rise from the dead the third day; that Thou didst ascend into heaven; that there Thou sittest on

Thy throne of glory, adored by angels, and interceding for sinners.

I believe, O Lord, that Thou hast instituted and ordained holy mysteries as pledges of Thy love, and for a continual commemoration of Thy death; that Thou hast not only given Thyself to die for me, but to be my spiritual food and sustenance in that holy sacrament, to my great and endless comfort. O may I frequently approach Thy altars with humility and devotion; and work in me all those holy and heavenly affections which become the remembrance of a crucified Saviour!

I believe, O Lord, that Thou hast not abandoned me to the dim light of my own reason to conduct me to happiness; but that Thou hast revealed in the holy Scriptures whatever is necessary for me to believe and practise, in order to my eternal salvation.

O Truth! eternal Truth! I am entirely satisfied in believing Thy holy word, because it came from Thee, who art infinitely wise and omniscient, and therefore canst not be deceived; who art infinitely good, and therefore wilt not deceive Thy creatures.

O how noble and excellent are the precepts! how sublime and enlightening the truths! how persuasive and strong the motives! how powerful the assistances of that holy religion, in which

Thou hast instructed me! My delight shall be in Thy statutes; and I will not forget Thy word.

I believe, O blessed Master, it is my greatest honour and happiness to be Thy disciple. How miserable and blind are those that live without God in the world, who despise the light of Thy holy faith! Make me ready to part with all the enjoyments of life, nay, even life itself, rather than forfeit this jewel of great price. Blessed are the sufferings which are endured, happy is the death which is undergone, for heavenly and immortal truth.

I believe Thou hast threatened everlasting and unconceivable torments to those who hold the truth in unrighteousness, and who obey not the Gospel of Christ. O just punishment of those who do not love Thee!

But if I believe this fatal doom, why am I not afraid of it? Why are the evils of the body so much shunned, and those of the soul so little regarded? Why do I take so much pains to avoid the short and transitory evils of this life, and so little pains to avoid those which are eternal?

I believe Thou hast prepared, O Lord, for those that love Thee, everlasting mansions of glory; if I believe Thee, O eternal Happiness, why does any thing appear difficult that leads

to Thee? Why should I not willingly resist unto blood to obtain Thee? Why do the vain and empty enjoyments of life take such fast hold of me? O perishing time! why dost thou thus bewitch and deceive me? O blessed eternity! when shalt thou be my portion for ever?

Acts of Hope.

O MY God, in all my dangers, temporal and spiritual, I will hope in Thee; who art almighty power, and therefore able to relieve me; who art infinite goodness, and therefore ready and willing to assist me.

Greater is Thy mercy, O blessed Jesus, than my wickedness; Thy goodness exceeds the number and heinousness of my sins; greater is Thy power, O God, than the fury of my enemies: therefore when my fears press hardest upon me, I will put my trust and confidence in Thee.

O precious blood of my dear Redeemer! O gaping wounds of my crucified Saviour! who can contemplate the sufferings of God incarnate, and not raise his hope and not put his trust in them!

I firmly hope, O my God, for the pardon of all my sins, which I heartily bewail and detest; I firmly hope to obtain the virtues and graces of Thy Holy Spirit, which I am resolved sin-

cerely to endeavour after; I wait and expect Thy eternal glory, which shall always be the aim of all my longing desires.

What though my body be crumbled into dust, and that dust blown over the face of the earth, yet I undoubtedly know my Redeemer lives, and shall raise me up at the last day.

Whether I am comforted, or left desolate; whether I enjoy peace, or am afflicted with temptations; whether I am healthful or sickly, succoured or abandoned by the good things of this life; I will always hope in Thee, O my chiefest infinite Good.

Although the fig-tree shall not blossom, neither shall fruit be in the vines; although the labour of the olive shall fail, and the fields yield no meat; although the flock shall be cut off from the fold, and there shall be no herd in the stalls; yet I will rejoice in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation.

What though I mourn and am afflicted here, and sigh under the miseries of this world for a time, I am sure my tears shall one day be turned into joy, and that joy none shall take from me.

I should too much injure Thy charity and Thy sufferings, O blessed Jesus, if I had not a firm hope of working out my salvation.

Great is the malice of the powers of darkness, and great is my own weakness; but how much greater is Thy goodness and Thy might, O my gracious God! I will, therefore, work out my salvation with fear and trembling; but as long as I live, I will hope in Thy mercy.

O miserable wretch that I am! If I hope, why do not my endeavours answer my hopes? If I hope to obtain the grace of God to overcome my follies, and to acquire all necessary virtues, why do I not labour to such holy purposes?

Whoever hopes for great things in this world takes pains to attain them; how can my hopes of everlasting life be well grounded, if I do not strive and labour for that eternal inheritance?

I will never refuse the meanest labours, while I look to receive such glorious wages; I will never repine at any temporal loss, while I expect to gain such eternal rewards.

Blessed hope! be thou my chief delight in life, and then I shall be stedfast and unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord; be thou my comfort and support at the hour of death, and then I shall contentedly leave this world, as a captive that is released from his imprisonment.

Acts of Love.

ALMIGHTY and everlasting God, Thou art infinite in all excellencies and perfections, and therefore art the most proper object of the love and adoration of immortal souls; Thou art infinite in goodness and loving-kindness towards me, and therefore hast the justest claim to my heart.

O infinite Amiableness! when shall I love Thee without bounds, without coldness or interruption, which, alas, so often seize me here below? Let me never suffer any creature to be Thy rival, or to share my heart with Thee; let me have no other God, no other love, but only Thee.

Whatever is amiable in the creatures is derived from Thee, and is no farther amiable than it bears some impression of Thy amiableness; their goodness is imperfect, and mixed with much evil, but Thou only art perfectly excellent; O let the world never more have place in my heart! All my affections I withdraw from that to fix on Thee.

O dear Jesus, who didst love me to such a degree, that Thou wert pleased for my sake to endure a painful and shameful death, how is it possible I can live without loving Thee?

O how much is it the grief of my heart, that my love is so imperfect, so little fixed upon the most deserving object! O when shall I love Thee to the utmost capacity of a creature, and praise Thee to all eternity?

How afflicting is it to me not to love Thee as much as I desire! Alas, when shall I love Thee with all my strength? When shall all carnal affections die in me, and all things belonging to the Spirit live and grow in me? When shall I be willing to lay down my life for Thee, who hast shed Thy precious blood for me?

Grant, O God, that I may continually exercise upon earth what the blessed saints practise with so much fervour in heaven: the glories and pleasures of that happy region would be imperfect, if the flame of love did not continually burn before Thee.

Whoever loves, desires to please the beloved object; and according to the degree of love is the greatness of desire: make me, O God, diligent and earnest in pleasing Thee; let me cheerfully discharge the most painful and costly duties, and forsake friends, riches, ease, and life itself, rather than disobey Thee.

Whoever loves, desires the welfare and happiness of the beloved object; but Thou, O dear Jesus, canst receive no addition from my imper-

fect services: what shall I do to express my affection towards Thee? I will relieve the necessities of my poor brethren, who are members of Thy body; for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen?

I will pray without ceasing, and seriously meditate upon Thy precepts; I will hear Thy word with reverence and attention, and receive the holy sacrament with humility and devotion: for these are the methods Thou hast established of conversing with Thee, of uniting us to Thee, and are the only means whereby I can enjoy Thee here below.

Alas, how is all my time unprofitable, my labour lost, my actions and sufferings vain, when they are not employed in Thy service; when they are not endured for the love of Thee, my God!

I will long for Thy appearing, O blessed Jesus, because it will transform me into Thy likeness; because it will enter me into the full enjoyment of Thee, and unite me to Thee for ever. The utmost labour of all my days is little enough, the service of my whole life short enough, and no more than sufficient to secure this eternal inheritance.

O crucified Jesus, in whom I live, and without whom I die! mortify in me all sensual de-

sires; inflame my heart with Thy holy love, that I may no longer esteem the vanities of this world, but place my affections entirely on Thee.

Let my last breath, when my soul shall leave my body, breathe forth love to Thee, my God. I entered into life without acknowledging Thee, let me therefore finish it in loving Thee; O let the last act of life be love!

Acts of Conformity to the Will of God.

Blessed will of God! how just and upright art Thou in all Thy determinations! How good and amiable in all Thy dispensations! They only love Thee not who know Thee not; and they who know Thee not, how miserable are they!

What art Thou, O Lord? and what am I? Thou art all wisdom, I am all blindness and ignorance. Choose Thou for me; let Thy holy will be done in me and by me; because if I should choose and will for myself, all would be vanity, rashness, and folly.

Thou art a God infinite in mercy and loving-kindness, therefore wilt order all things to my greatest advantage. Wo to me, when my will is not obedient and resigned to Thy blessed will in every thing!

O my God, Thou canst will nothing but that which is truly good, and I am capable of willing every thing that is monstrously evil; I therefore renounce my own will, I submit to be entirely governed by Thine.

The designs of Thy mercy are to make me happy to all eternity; and my perverse inclinations run after present pleasures, how contrary soever they may be to Thy gracious purposes. It is therefore reasonable, O Lord, that I should distrust my own guidance, and that Thy blessed will should direct all my ways.

Holiness is the path my God hath chalked out to everlasting bliss; may Thy holy will be accomplished in me, and then I shall be sanctified by Thy grace in this world, and glorified in the enjoyment of Thyself in the next!

Thy will, O blessed Jesus, is, that I should avoid all sin, and purify myself as Thou art pure; my own will does but too often prevail upon me to transgress Thy holy laws, which therefore I detest and abhor. Thy will shall be my rule, because it makes me do every thing that is good.

How true is it, O my Jesus, that Thou art my Lord and Master, my omnipotent Sovereign! How fit and reasonable therefore is it, that Thy will in every thing should be my choice and satisfaction!

Consider well, O my soul, that upon two wills depends either thy happiness or thy misery: upon the will of God, thy happiness; upon thy own will, thy misery. Consider well to which thou choosest to unite thyself, because eternal happiness and eternal misery are of too great importance to be neglected.

It is easy, O Lord, to submit to Thy will when it is pleasing and agreeable to our natures; but certainly it is no less our duty when Thou thinkest fit to try us with difficulties, and to contradict the inclinations of flesh and blood.

In all Thy sufferings, in Thy painful crucifixion and shameful death, O my dear Jesus, Thou didst entirely resign Thyself to the will of Thy Father. Shall I murmur against less sufferings, which I have so much deserved? Shall I not quietly and patiently submit to them?

If I do not love Thee, O my God, more than myself, I am not worthy of Thee; if I do not prefer Thy will to my own, it is much to be feared I do not love Thee: O my God, I will deny myself to be made perfect in love.

Thy will, O God, is Thy blessed self; they, therefore, who refuse to follow Thy will declare that Thou shalt not reign over them; that they desire not the knowledge of Thy ways. It is

Thee, I desire, O my God; I renounce my own will, therefore, to follow Thine.

Acts of Virtue

In relation to the Passion of our Saviour.

WHITHER has love carried Thee, O blessed Jesus, even to the painful and shameful death of the cross for my sake? O how imperfect is my love, if afflictions or crosses are able to separate me from Thee! or if I am not willing to endure the greatest torments rather than forsake Thee!

Thou wert, O Jesus, so in love with sufferings for me, that rather than come down from the cross, Thou didst choose to expire upon it. Miserable wretch that I am! how does my flesh and blood start at the very appearance of a violent death, though it might be necessary as a testimony of the truth of my affection towards Thee!

Thy sacred head was crowned with thorns, and all Thy body ploughed with scourges, but my sins and follies added sharpness to them, and pierced Thee and wounded Thee more than the thorns and scourges themselves. O how I grieve and love, when I consider my iniquities drew upon Thee all Thy sorrows;

those exquisite pains and torments in Thy body; those inexpressible fears and anguish in Thy soul!

I do for ever, O Lord, detest and abjure those sins that were Thy tormentors; I will persecute those vile lusts and affections that crucified Thee; I will fly from all appearance of evil.

Is it possible not to love Thee, O blessed Saviour, above all things, who hast delivered me from such imperious masters? Is it possible to remember that my sins occasioned all Thy grief, and ever to offend Thee more?

What does my soul long for? What is the desire of my heart? Is it possible that empty frail creatures only should rejoice and delight it, when divine love displays itself in the bleeding wounds of the suffering Jesus?

Let the fire of divine love burn bright in my soul; never will I search for any other fuel to nourish this holy flame than Thy scourges and Thy thorns, than Thy reed and Thy cross.

Thy whole life was spent in doing good; and so far from indulging the pleasures of sense, that Thou hadst not where to lay Thy head; and whoever frequents the Christian sacrifice must be convinced at what a rate Thou didst value the welfare of mankind: for Thou didst

willingly embrace all sorts of sufferings in order to accomplish it.

What folly and rashness is it, therefore, for me to be always caressing myself with sensual enjoyments; to be spending my estate in jollity, in splendour, in folly and luxury, which ought to be employed in doing good to the souls and bodies of men! How unlike is this to that example Thou hast set before me, and to that disposition of mind Thou requirest of me!

Alas, suffering can only affright those that consider themselves, and not Thee; that love themselves, and not Thee, O my crucified Jesus! Thou wert made perfect through sufferings, and can I behold and love such a blessed pattern, and not desire to suffer with Thee, and to die for Thee?

Who can fathom this abyss of divine love? I am the criminal, and Thou, O blessed Jesus, art crucified; what ought I not to have suffered, to have gained an interest in Thee? And yet what hast Thou not suffered to purchase such a wretch as I am?

I have offended Thee, and Thou reconcilest me with Thy own blood; I occasioned Thy death, and Thou givest me life. Was there ever any love like that love which my Lord and my God has shewed towards me?

When I consider Thee, O dear Jesus, what Thou art in Thyself, and what Thou art to me, I feel myself constrained to love Thee. Where shall I discover greater excellencies and perfections to raise my admiration? Where shall I find greater bounty and goodness to engage my affections?

Acts of Humility.

O MY God, Thou art the eternal source of all excellency and perfection; and I, miserable wretch! what am I? Nothing but poor dust and ashes, folly and vanity. It is reasonable, therefore, I should obey Thee, because Thou art infinitely above me; that I should submit to Thee in all things, without grudging, without murmuring, because Thou art infinite wisdom.

Blessed humility! when shall I possess thee? When shall I enjoy that tranquillity of mind, which is only found among those that love and obey thee? When shall I be adorned with that comeliness and beauty, which thou only canst bestow?

What have I, O Lord, whereof to glory? If of my body, it is nothing but vile clay moulded by Thy omnipotent hand, and must return to rottenness, and be the food of worms; if of my

mind, it is the breath of life infused by Thee, and by my own folly made full of sin and wickedness. I have gone astray from the womb, and in sin did my mother conceive me.

All the good I possess comes from Thee; if my outward man has any advantages above others, it is the effect of Thy bounty, from whence proceeds health and strength, beauty and comeliness, and upon Thy will they depend, to be recalled at a moment. If my mind has the least excellency, it is Thy gift, who didst endue me with reason and grace: all that is my own, is the abuse of Thy favours; and whatever is bad in me, is properly mine.

I am unworthy, O Lord, of all Thy gifts by reason of my vileness and ingratitude. I do not deserve the air I breathe in, because I have infected it as it were with noisome lusts; I do not deserve the bread I eat, because my table has become a snare, and the good creatures Thou hast given me for refreshment have been abused to luxury and sensuality.

O let me consider what I am by nature, frail and weak; what I am by sin, odious and contemptible in Thy sight: and let this knowledge of myself suppress and mortify all proud and vain thoughts; let a sense of my own vileness and unworthiness make me humble myself as it were in dust and ashes.

It is the sincere desire of my soul, O blessed Jesus! it is the firm choice of my will, to be rather a door-keeper in the house of my God than to dwell in the tents of wickedness.

I will not place my pleasure and satisfaction in the praise of men, because it is an uncertain breath of air, apt to swell me with pride and vanity, and is the effect of civility and charity, rather than of what I deserve. I will in all my actions endeavour to please Thee, though it be attended with ignominy and reproach, and though I thereby become the contempt of the scornful.

O let me bear the injuries and affronts of bad men with patience and meekness, because I have deserved much worse treatment from Thee. Let me receive the reproofs and admonitions of good men with thankfulness, because I stand so much in need of them, and that they are so proper to correct my follies.

O let me never insult over the follies and sins of my fellow-Christians, because I am liable to the same temptations; let me pity and compassionate their misfortunes, because if I am not plunged in the same gulf of misery, it is wholly owing to Thy grace which has preserved me, to Thy almighty hand which has held me up.

How didst Thou condescend, O dear Jesus,

to be born in a stable, to lead a life destitute of all comforts and accommodations, to die upon a cross, and all this for the good of Thy sinful creatures; and shall I think any labour too grievous, any office too mean, whereby I may be able to promote the temporal and eternal happiness of my neighbour?

Without Thee, O Jesus, I can do nothing; inspire me with that humility which Thou hast taught by Thy precepts, and by Thy own example; I will endeavour to imitate Thy state of humiliation here upon earth, that I may partake of those glories Thou now dost possess at the right hand of Thy Father.

Acts of Contrition.

O most gracious God, who art the inexhaustible Fountain of all goodness, who art only amiable; how grievously have I offended Thee! What return have I made for those graces and favours which Thou hast bestowed upon me? What tribute have I paid to Thine infinite perfections? I will declare my iniquity, and be sorry for my sins.

I will repent, O my God, of my sins as the greatest of evils; and the remembrance of them shall be more grievous and afflicting to me than that of any other evil whatsoever: for they are

the offences of a vile creature against Thee, the great Creator, the chiefest and most desirable good; wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes.

I can plead nothing, O Lord, to extenuate the guilt of my sins; I ought to have renounced every thing that is valuable in life, nay, even life itself, rather than to have offended Thee, whose loving-kindness is better than life. But I do now most heartily detest my sins, because they are displeasing to Thee, who art infinite goodness; and I purpose, by the help of Thy grace, to live better for the time to come.

Thou hast graciously declared, O my chiefest Good, that a broken spirit is a sacrifice acceptable to Thee; that Thou wilt not despise a broken and a contrite heart. O my heart, let grief and sorrow rend thee in pieces, who hast hitherto sacrificed thyself to a vain and wicked world.

If the sorrow of this vale of tears could enter into the state of the blessed, even in heaven I would lament the offences committed against the great Lord of heaven and earth; but whilst I am here below I will turn unto Thee, O Lord, with weeping and mourning, and I will choose the greatest sufferings, rather than offend Thee.

I love Thee, O my God; and how much is it the grief of my soul that I have not always loved Thee! that I have not always had a regard to Thy divine precepts! O that my head were waters, and my eyes a fountain of tears, that I might weep much, and love much, having much to be forgiven.

As my love increases towards Thee, O dear Jesus, so much the more do I grieve for my sins, which made Thee a man of sorrow and acquainted with grief. And I am so much the more resolved, by the help of Thy grace, to abstain from all evil for the time to come, by how much the more I rejoice in every thing that tends to Thy honour and glory.

O, for what empty shadows have I forfeited the favour of the Most High! For what trifling vanities have I incurred the displeasure of my best Benefactor! I have sinned, O Lord; I have sinned against heaven and in Thy sight, and am no more worthy to be called Thy son. But I return with the prodigal; O, let Thy paternal bowels yearn on me, and graciously receive me.

How can I behold Thee, O infinite Goodness, and not love Thee? How can I love Thee, and not grieve for having offended Thee? and not detest my sins, and not resolve to forsake them? O may I always sincerely love

Thee, and then I shall always renounce and abhor every thing that is evil.

The torments of the damned are justly the objects of my fear; and when I consider that they are eternal, I tremble, O Lord, at Thy just and omnipotent wrath provoked by my heinous transgressions. But, O let the sense of having offended infinite Goodness be more grievous and afflicting to me than that of any other evil whatsoever.

Blessed Jesus! hast Thou not redeemed me from many and great evils? Hast Thou not heaped upon me abundant testimonies of Thy goodness and loving-kindness? And yet have not mine iniquities increased over my head, and my trespasses grown unto the heavens? But I will break off my sins by righteousness, and mine iniquities by shewing mercy to the poor.

O, my God, I will lie down in shame, and confusion shall cover me. The measure of my sorrow shall bear some proportion to the heinousness of my sins. I will keep under my body, and bring it into subjection. I will avoid all fresh occasions of backsliding; I will obey Thee in all things, and suffer with patience whatsoever punishment Thou shalt think fit to inflict upon me. Happy, infinitely happy! if upon any terms I can procure Thy love and favour.

O heavenly Father, for Thine own infinite mercy's sake; for Thy truth and promise sake; for all the merits and sufferings of the Son of Thy love, in whom Thou art always well pleased; pardon all my sins and failings, and receive me into Thy favour. Amen, O Lord God, amen, amen.

Acts of Praise.

PRAISE the Lord, O my soul; for it is a good thing to sing praises unto our God: O sing praises unto His Name; for it is lovely. Thy Name, O Lord, endureth for ever; so doth Thy Memorial, O Lord, from one generation to another. As long as I live I will praise the Lord; as long as I have any being I will sing praises unto my God.

To Thee, O Lord, belongeth greatness, and power, and glory, and victory, and majesty: for all that is in the heaven and in the earth is Thine; Thine is the kingdom, O Lord, and Thou art exalted as Head above all. Blessed and praised be Thy holy Name, O Lord God, for ever and for ever.

Thou art the everlasting and eternal King, before the mountains were brought forth, or ever Thou hadst formed the earth and the world; from everlasting to everlasting Thou art God.

I will trust in the Lord for ever; for in the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength.

Thou art, O Lord, the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever; and Thy years fail not. Thy goodness, Thy power, Thy wisdom, and Thy righteousness, endure for ever; with Thee is no variableness, nor shadow of turning. The counsel of the Lord standeth for ever; and the thoughts of His heart to all generations. The wicked, therefore, must feel the power of Thy wrath, the weight of Thy almighty arm; and Thou wilt give grace and glory, and withhold no good thing from them that live a godly life.

Praised be Thy Being, which knows no bounds or limits, but doth spread and diffuse itself every way beyond the capacity of our shallow imagination. The darkest corners and the most private recesses cannot exclude Thy presence. Whither shall I go from Thy Spirit? or whither shall I flee from Thy presence? Can any hide himself in secret that Thou shalt not see him, who fillest heaven and earth?

Thou art an Almighty God; is any thing too hard for Thee? The Lord of Hosts hath purposed it, who shall disannul it? Thou art able to make good all Thy promises, and none can stay Thy hand. Thou canst inflict the

greatest punishments upon the wicked, and none can withstand Thy power. Who can resist the destruction which the Lord sends? They only are secure of a safe refuge who abide under the shadow of the Almighty.

Praised be the Lord, who only searcheth the hearts of all the children of men: there is not a word in the tongue but Thou knowest it altogether; Thine eyes are upon the ways of man, and Thou seest all his goings. There is no darkness where the workers of iniquity can hide themselves. Let all the earth love and fear Thee; for Thou knowest, and canst reward their services. Let the faithful call upon Thee in all their straits; for Thy ear is open to their cry: and let every one prepare for that dreadful tribunal, where every thought shall be brought into judgment. God is greater than our hearts, and knoweth all things.

O Lord, how manifold are Thy works! in wisdom hast Thou made them all; Thou hast framed all things in number, weight, and measure, and governest them with the best order and greatest harmony; Thou choosest what is best for us, and prescribest the best means for the advancement of our happiness. But that wisdom can never be sufficiently praised which is manifested in the stupendous mystery

of man's redemption, where all the divine attributes shined with the greatest lustre; which to them that perish is foolishness, but to them that are saved the power of God, and the wisdom of God. Happy is the man that findeth this wisdom, that getteth this understanding!

Praised be Thy Name, who keepest truth for ever, who wilt not suffer Thy faithfulness to fail, nor alter the thing that is gone out of Thy mouth. Heaven and earth shall pass away, but Thy words shall not pass away till all things be fulfilled. Thou art a God of truth, without iniquity and deceit; no deceitful person shall rest upon Thy holy hill: he that telleth lies shall not tarry in Thy sight.

The Lord is righteous in all His ways, and holy in all His works. He will not clear the guilty, nor respect the persons of men, but rewardeth every man according to his work. Tribulation and anguish shall be the portion of every soul that loveth evil; but glory, honour, and peace, shall be to every man that worketh good.

Thou art a holy God, and of purer eyes than to behold iniquity, and hast no pleasure in wickedness. It is contrary to the purity of Thy nature, to the perfection of Thy laws, and to those pleasures which are at Thy right hand for evermore. Let us, therefore, put on the new

man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness; let us purify ourselves as God is pure: for without holiness no man shall see the Lord.

Praised be the Lord for His great goodness, which is extended to all His creatures, and for the wonders which He doth for the children of men. Whatever appears good in the best of Thy creatures is derived from Thee; the earth is full of Thy goodness, and nothing is hid from the influence of it. Thou loadest us with Thy blessings, that Thou mayest engage us to returns of love and gratitude; and if we are bound in fetters, and held in the cords of affliction, it is that we may see our transgressions, and turn from our iniquities; and still Thou waitest to be gracious. O that men would praise the Lord for His goodness, and declare the wonders that He doth for the children of men.

A Prayer,

Which may be used at any time in the Week before the Sunday or holyday on which we design to communicate, and which may properly be annexed to our Morning Devotions at such times.

Most gracious and merciful God, who hast, by

Thy minister, given me an invitation to Thy heavenly feast; grant me grace to approach Thy holy mysteries with penitential preparation, and with a heart fully disposed to serve and obey Thee all the days of my life.

Enable me, O my God, I most humbly beseech Thee, to *examine* the state of my own mind, to compare my actions with the rule of Thy laws, that nothing contrary to Thy holy will may ever find a settled abode in my soul: Thou knowest all that load of impiety and guilt under which I lie, help me, therefore, so impartially to judge and condemn myself, so humbly to repent and beg pardon, that I may not be condemned at Thy dreadful tribunal. But, alas, after the most strict examination we can make, who can number his impieties? who can tell how oft he offendeth? Cleanse me, therefore, O Lord, from my secret faults, which in general I renounce and bewail.

O my God, who alone canst order the unruly wills and affections of sinful men, be pleased to change my heart into an entire love of Thee, that I may be unfeignedly sorry for having offended Thee, who art infinite goodness; that, with a broken and contrite heart, I may grieve and mourn, and repent for all my former sins, and may for ever forsake them; and for the future stedfastly purpose to lead a new life,

that I may renew my baptismal vow, and hereafter live as a sworn votary to Thy love.

O heavenly Father, settle in my soul a lively faith in Thy mercy through Christ, a stedfast belief of all Thy love to sinners, and an affectionate reliance on the merits and mediation of Thy crucified Son; of my being accepted in the Beloved, for whom I will ever adore and praise Thee.

O my crucified God, Thou sovereign inflammative of love, let the remembrance of Thy death set all the powers of my soul on work; that I may desire and pant after Thee; that I may admire and adore Thee; that I may take heavenly delight in Thy gracious presence; that, with praise and thanksgiving, I may receive Thee into my heart, and always entertain Thee with pious dispositions and devout affections.

I see, O blessed Jesus, in the memorial of Thy sufferings, how Thou didst forgive me, and didst love me when I was Thy enemy; give me grace to love my neighbour, and to be in charity with all men; to forgive all my enemies, and to be at peace with all the world, as I desire to be beloved and forgiven, and to be at peace with Thee. All that have any way injured me I freely forgive, for Thy sake, O Lord; and if I have wronged or injured my neighbour, give me grace to beg his pardon;

and, as I have opportunity, to make him satisfaction and restitution according to my power. Whenever I see any of Thy poor members hungry, or naked, or in distress, let the remembrance of Thy love in dying for me engage me to contribute all I can to their relief: may they ever liberally partake of what I enjoy, since Thou wert so liberal of Thy inestimable blood for me!

Thus prepared, O Lord, let me approach Thy holy table, and so eat the flesh of Thy dear Son Jesus Christ, and drink His blood, that my sinful body may be made clean by His body, and my soul washed through His most precious blood, that I may evermore dwell in Him, and He in me. Amen.

A Prayer

In our retirement, after we are returned home from the Lord's Table, which may be added to our Evening Devotions.

I ACKNOWLEDGE, O Lord my God, with all thankfulness of heart, Thy great mercy and goodness communicated to me this day, in giving me an opportunity of approaching Thy holy table, and disposing my mind to commemorate the infinite love of my crucified Saviour;

to render Him thanks and praise for laying down His life as a sacrifice for the sins of the world; and to represent unto Thee that sacrifice as a full satisfaction for them, whereby Thou dost incline me humbly to hope for all the benefits of His death and passion.

How many, O Lord, turn a deaf ear to all the pressing exhortations of Thy ministers; and being influenced by the cares, and riches, and pleasures of life, when they are invited refuse to come! How many pious and devout souls are deprived of the blessed advantage of this highest and most solemn act of religion! and how many sincere and faithful Christians are oppressed with scruples, dejected with fears, so that they dare not venture to partake of the holy mysteries!

What thanks, therefore, most gracious God, can I return unto Thy divine Majesty for impressing a sense of my duty upon my mind, and for that strength and power whereby Thou hast in some measure enabled me to perform it? I will praise and magnify Thy great and glorious Name; and I will entirely devote myself to Thy service as long as I have any being.

Blessed be Thy Name for those fresh supplies of grace I have received at Thy altar; grant that they may make me run the way of Thy commandments with delight and pleasure;

that I may never any more faint or droop, or tire in my duty.

Blessed be Thy Name for those comfortable assurances Thou hast given me of pardon and forgiveness. Let this Thy compassionate goodness be a perpetual obligation to love and gratitude; let it put me upon my guard, that I may watch over all my ways, and do always that which is well-pleasing in Thy sight.

Blessed be Thy Name for that peace and quiet Thou hast restored to my soul; for those resolutions Thou hast wrought in me to persevere in Thy service to the end of my days: make them firm, vigorous, and constant; and never let any sinful passions any more ruffle and discompose my mind.

Blessed be Thy Name for that relish Thou hast given me of spiritual delights, that desire of possessing the eternal inheritance; let the enjoyments of sense appear mean and contemptible, and let not the pleasures of the world any more prevail upon me to transgress Thy holy laws.

Grant, O Lord, that I may walk worthy of these Thy distinguishing mercies, and live as becomes the redeemed of the Lord. Without Thee, O blessed Jesus, I can do nothing; without Thee, who art the Sun of Righteousness, I shall walk in darkness; without Thee, who art

the Physician of souls, I shall languish and die; without Thee, who art the joy of all devout minds, I shall consume my days away in sadness. Remain, therefore, O Lord, and abide with me for ever; I shall then be enabled to do Thy will in this life, and thereby be qualified to partake of Thy glories to all eternity in the next. Amen, amen.

[*Since it is possible this little treatise may fall into hands that may be destitute of helps for family devotions, I have added a morning and evening prayer for such occasions.*]

A Morning Prayer for a Family.

O ETERNAL God, Creator and Preserver of all mankind, Giver of all spiritual grace, the Author of everlasting life; we, Thine unworthy servants, entirely desire to praise Thy Name for all the expressions of Thy bounty towards us. We give Thee thanks that Thou hast preserved us from many and great dangers wherewith we have been encompassed; that Thou hast brought us safe to the light of this day; and that Thou hast refreshed us the past night with quiet rest and sleep. But, above all, blessed be Thy love that gave Thy Son to die for our sins, to put us in a way of being happy, if we would obey

Thee; and, after all our wilful refusals of Thy grace, still hast patience with us, and hast added this one day more to all we have misspent already, to see if we will finish the work Thou hast set us to do, and fit ourselves for eternal glory.

Pardon, good Lord, all our former sins, and all our abuses of Thy forbearance and long-suffering, for which we are now sorry at our hearts; give us grace to lead more holy lives, and to be more careful in improving all future opportunities. Make Thyself present to our minds, and let Thy love and Thy fear rule in our souls in all those places and companies where our occasions shall lead us this day.

Keep us chaste in all our thoughts, temperate in all our enjoyments, humble in all our opinions of ourselves, charitable in all our speeches of others, meek and peaceable under all provocations, sincere and faithful in all our professions, and so just and upright in all our dealings, that no necessity may force, nor opportunity in any kind allure us to defraud or go beyond our neighbours. When Thou bestowest good on others, let us not envy, but rejoice in it; and when Thou addest any to ourselves, let us own Thy mercy, and humbly thank Thee for it.

Afford us convenient supplies in all our rea-

sonable necessities; and protect us against the approach of all dangers. Make us diligent in all our affairs; and give such success to all our lawful endeavours as Thou seest most expedient for us. Teach us contentedly to submit, and not to repine at any thing that happens by the allotment of Thy wise providence.

In all our passage through this world, and our manifold concerns in it, suffer not our hearts to be too much set upon it; but always fix our eyes upon the blessed hope, that as we go along we may make all the things of this world minister to it; and be careful, above all things, to fit our souls for that pure and perfect bliss which Thou hast prepared, for all that love and fear Thee, in the glories of Thy kingdom.

Give Thy grace, most merciful God, to all the world, and let all who are redeemed by the blood of Thy Son acknowledge Thee to be the Lord, and become His worshippers and faithful servants. Make all Christians conscientious practisers of that holiness they profess; and, above all, inspire them with uniting principles and charitable hearts, that by their loving one another, as Thou hast loved us, all the world may know they are Thy disciples. Let all governors rule with wisdom and justice, and subjects obey with love and cheerfulness. Let the

priests of the Lord be exemplary in their lives, and discreet and diligent in their labours, having a most compassionate love of souls; and let the people be humble and tractable, most desirous to hearken, and fully bent to follow wise instructions. Relieve the afflicted, and those that are in want, assist them contentedly to depend on Thee. Raise friends to the widows and fatherless, the prisoners and captives, and all that groan under any oppression. Give repentance, patience, and resignation to all that lie upon beds of sickness, and ease when Thou seest it convenient for them. Speak peace to troubled consciences, by delivering them from their causeless scruples, and by making them constant in the practice of holiness. Bless all our friends, who are especially endeared to us by their kindnesses, all our relations according to the flesh, all that particularly pray for us, or desire our prayers. Teach us all to ask what Thou approvest, and then grant us whatsoever is asked.

Prevent us in all our actions; guard us against all dangers; relieve us in all straits; and grant that we may always make Thee our confidence, and take all things well that Thou orderest for us. Shorten our sorrows, and deliver us from all our sins, and fit us all for that eternal kingdom which Thou hast prepared for

us, for Jesus's sake; in whose holy Name and words we further pray unto Thee.

Our Father, &c.

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Ghost, be with us all, this day and for evermore. Amen.

An Evening Prayer for a Family.

Almighty God, Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Maker of all things, Judge of all men; we acknowledge and bewail our manifold sins and wickedness, which we from time to time most grievously have committed, by thought, word, and deed, against Thy divine Majesty, provoking most justly Thy wrath and indignation against us; we do earnestly repent, and are heartily sorry for these our misdoings, and the remembrance of them is grievous unto us.

Have mercy upon us, O Lord, after Thy great goodness, according to the multitude of Thy mercies do away our offences; wash us thoroughly from our wickedness, and cleanse us from our sins; create and make in us new and contrite hearts; that we, worthily lamenting our past follies, and acknowledging our wretchedness, may obtain of Thee, the God of all mercy, perfect remission and forgiveness.

Grant us, O Lord, the assistance of Thy Holy Spirit, that for the time to come we may think and do such things as be rightful; that we, who cannot do any thing that is good without Thee, may by Thee be enabled to live according to Thy will; that Thy grace may always so prevent and follow us, as to make us continually to be given to all good works. And Thou, O God, who knowest us to be set in the midst of so many and great dangers, that by reason of the frailty of our nature we cannot always stand upright, grant to us such strength and protection as may support us in all dangers, and carry us through all temptations.

Help us, O Lord, to withstand the assaults of the enemies of our salvation, the world, the flesh, and the devil; and with pure hearts and minds to follow Thee the only God. Graft in our souls the love of Thy Name, increase in us true religion, nourish us with all goodness, and of Thy great mercy keep us in the same. And Thou, O God, whose never-failing providence ordereth all things both in heaven and earth, put from us, we beseech Thee, all hurtful things, and give us those things which are profitable for us. And since it is Thou alone canst order the unruly wills and affections of sinful men, grant that we may love the things which

Thou commandest, and desire that which Thou dost promise, that so, among the sundry and manifold changes of the world, our hearts may surely there be fixed where true joys are to be found. Dispose us, by all the means of grace we enjoy, to attain that everlasting salvation Thou hast promised; that we may both perceive and know those things which we ought to do, and may have grace and power faithfully to fulfil the same.

Teach us, O Lord, so to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom; and grant that neither the splendour of any thing that is great, nor the conceit of any thing that is good in us, may any way withdraw our eyes from looking upon ourselves as sinful dust and ashes, but that we may press forward towards the prize of the high calling that is before us with faith and patience, with humility and meekness, with mortification and self-denial, with charity and constant perseverance to the end; that so when we shall depart this life, we may sleep in the Lord, and at the general resurrection in the last day may be found acceptable in Thy sight, and receive that blessing which Thy beloved Son shall then confer upon all those that truly love and fear Thee.

Charge Thy holy providence, O Lord, we

humbly beseech Thee, with us this night, and by Thy great mercy defend us from all the perils and dangers of it. Keep us both outwardly in our bodies, and inwardly in our souls, that we may be defended from all adversities that may happen to the body, and from all evil thoughts that may assault and hurt the soul.

Extend Thy goodness, O Lord, to the whole race of mankind; have mercy upon all Jews, Turks, infidels, and heretics; take from them all ignorance, hardness of heart, and contempt of Thy Word; and so fetch them home to Thy flock, that they may be saved among the remnant of the true Israelites. Grant unto all them that are admitted into the fellowship of Christ's religion, that they may eschew those things that are contrary to their profession, and follow all such things as are agreeable to the same. Let Thy continual pity cleanse and defend Thy Church; and because it cannot continue in safety without Thy succour, preserve it evermore by Thy help and goodness. Bless all our governors both in Church and State, that in their several stations they may be useful and serviceable to Thy glory and the public good. We make our humble supplications to Thee for all our benefactors, friends, and relations, and also for our very enemies; let Thy fatherly hand be ever over them, let Thy Holy Spirit be ever

with them, and so lead them in the knowledge and obedience of Thy Word, that in the end they may obtain everlasting life. Look with an eye of pity and compassion upon all those who are any ways afflicted in mind, body, or estate; give them patience under all their sufferings, and in Thy due time a happy issue out of all their afflictions.

And as we pray unto Thee, O God, for ourselves and others, so we desire to bless and praise Thy holy Name for all Thy goodness and loving-kindness to us and to all men. We give Thee hearty thanks for Thy preservation of us this day past, and the rest of our lives, from innumerable accidents and dangers, for the comforts and conveniences as well as the necessaries of life. But above all, we laud and magnify and adore Thy goodness, in the redemption of the world by the death and passion of our Saviour Christ, both God and man; who did humble Himself, even to the death upon the cross, for us miserable sinners, who lay in darkness, and in the shadow of death, that He might make us the children of God, and exalt us to everlasting life. Teach us to express our thankfulness, by submitting ourselves entirely to His holy will and pleasure, and by studying to serve Him in true holiness and righteousness all the days of our life. Accept, O Lord, of these our

prayers and praises, in and through the mediation of Jesus Christ, our blessed Saviour and Redeemer, who has taught us, when we pray, to say,

Our Father, &c.

LONDON:
PRINTED BY ROBSON, LEVEY, AND FRANKLYN,
Great New Street, Fetter Lane.

DEVOTIONAL BOOKS

LATELY PUBLISHED BY JAMES BURNS.

I.

HORÆ CANONICÆ;

OR,

Devotions for the Seven stated Hours of Prayer,

Both in substance and form according to the Catholic Ritual.

BY AN ANGLICAN PRESBYTER.

In 18mo, cloth, 3*s*. 6*d*.

II.

Companion to the Communion.

Beautifully printed in royal 32mo, a New Edition,

EUCHARISTICA:

Meditations and Prayers, with Select Passages on the most Holy Eucharist, from old English Divines, with an Introduction

BY SAMUEL WILBERFORCE, M.A.,
Archdeacon of Surrey.

This Volume contains also the COMMUNION SERVICE, with the Rubrics printed in Red.

Price, in cloth, 2*s*. 6*d*.; roan, gilt edges, 3*s*. 6*d*.; russia or morocco, 5*s*.

III.

Uniform with the above,

HORÆ SACRÆ:

A Manual of Private Meditations and Prayers, from the older Divines. With an Introduction

BY THE REV. JOHN CHANDLER, M.A.
Vicar of Whitley, Surrey.

3d edition, enlarged and revised. Cloth, 2*s*. 6*d*.; roan, 3*s*. 6*d*.; morocco, 5*s*.

This Work contains Prayers for various circumstances and occasions, to a greater extent than is to be found elsewhere in the same compass.

IV.

PRAYERS

FOR UNITY AND GUIDANCE INTO THE TRUTH.

Price 2*d*., or 14*s*. per 100.

33380
265.343F
N336
1841
Nelson, R.
AUTHOR
Great duty of frequenting
TITLE
the Christian sacrifice
BORROWER'S NAME
DATE RETURNED

265.343F
N336
1841

33380